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GLEANINGS ON SOCIAL LIFE FROM THE AVADĀNAS

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A NOTE

With this Monograph from the learned pen of Prof. K. A. Nilakantha Sastri of the Madras University, the Indian Research Institute begins its Dr. B. C. Law Research Studies Series. Prof. Sastri's name and fame as an indologist of the first rank are well-known to scholars all over the world. The Institute is thankful to him for his valuable contributions embodied in this Monograph.

Dr. B. C. Law, who is closely associated with this Institute has earned the gratitude of its members for his launching upon this Series of Research Studies, which this Institute has rightly named after him. It is expected that with the co-operation of scholars and patronage of Dr. Law, the Institute would be able to bring out similar studies that will throw a flood of light on the culture and civilisation of Bhāratavarṣa and thereby enable the students and scholars to reap the fruit of such valuable researches.

We are glad to bring out this publication on the 1st day of the Bengali new year which may see the dawn of a new era in the history of human civilisation based on Universal Brotherhood, after the cessation of the world war.

It is expected that scholars will appreciate this contribution and the learned bodies will encourage us by subscribing to this series.

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S. C. Seal

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K. A, N.

ERRATUM

Read 'Avadānas' for 'Avadanas' and for 'Abadanas' in the headings of the Pages.

GLEANINGS ON SOCIAL LIFE FROM THE AVADĀNAS

The word *avadāna* denotes illustrious actions, heroic deeds, or a narrative of such actions and deeds. In Buddhist literature it is the name of a particular type of story narrated by the Buddha himself or some other very eminent holy person; the story was calculated to illustrate the operation of the Law of Karma and its 'paramount and coercive power' (Speyer), and several *avadānas* end with the moral stated in set terms that black actions bear black fruits, white actions white fruits, and mixed ones mixed fruits, and that consequently men should strive only after white actions and shun the other two. The stories purport usually to be narratives of incidents that took place in the Buddha's life-time; but some are also placed in the ages of earlier Buddhas while others are prophecies (*vyākaraṇa)* of a future time like the *avadānas* centring round Aśoka and his contemporaries. The *avadāna* is very similar to the *Jātaka* in its content and purpose; but while in every *Jātaka* the Bodhisattva must figure among the *dramatis personæ* there is no such rule regarding the *avadāna*—in fact several *avadānas* have common men and women and trivial acts of charity for their contents—so that while we may say that all *Jātakas* are *avadānas,* we cannot assert that all *avadānas* are *Jātakas.* Yet a large number of *avadānas* do have the Bodhisattva in the story, and these are sometimes distinguished by the name *Bodhisattvāvadāna.* The Jātaka proper relates to the past, and never concerns itself with the future.

The popular stories do not belong to the higher literature of Buddhism, but they furnished excellent propaganda material, as we should now call it, for bringing home to the common people the main tenets of a creed which from the beginning aimed at making the widest possible appeal to the laity by preaching *saddharma* to them; for on their active support the Order (*Saṅgha)* depended for the provision of the indispensable wants of daily

life to its members which are summed up in the *avadāna* texts in the oft-recurring cliché—*cīvara-piṇḍapātaśayanāsana-glāna-pratyayabhaiṣajya,* meaning cloth, food, bed, seat and medicine in illness. The use of interesting and edifying stories in religious discourses delivered among the *gṛhapatis,* merchants, artisans, farmers and others was a feature of Buddhism from the very start and 'was, at bottom, a matter of unconscious self-preservation' (Speyer) for the Order. The Jātakas which are portrayed on the stūpa of Bharhut must have enjoyed a long period of celebrity and popularity before they came to be regarded as fit subjects for stūpa decoration. Many of these stories were in no sense peculiar to Buddhism but were drawn from folklore and legendary matter of old ; that is how we come to have two versions, one Brahmanical and the other Buddhist, of some of these stories.

There is a large volume of *avadāna* literature of different ages ; my aim here is to bring together data on social life drawn from two of the earliest known works of this class viz., the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Avadāna-śataka.* The *Divyāvadāna* is, in substance, an anthology of the *avadāns* which occur by way of episodes or examples of rules or tenets in the extensive Vinaya and Sūtra works of the canon : Yet it should be considered in some respects a composite work. Though the bulk of it belongs, as Przyluski[1] has shown, to the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins, probably of the Mathurā school, one section of it (xxxiv) is definitely described as a *mahāyāna* text and bears the colophon :

iti śrīdivyāvadāne dānādhikāra-mahāyāna-sūtram samāptam.

And the salutation with which the book opens, viz., *Om namaḥ Sarvabuddha-bodhisattvebhyaḥ* also attests the presence of *mahāyāna* influences in the collection. Its date has been put in the middle of the second century A.D. by Sylvain Lévi, though Przyluski[2] thinks that the Aśokāvadāna began to take shape about 150-100 B.C.* The *Divyāvadāna* was edited in 1886 by Cowell and Neil, and the references that follow are to that edition issued from Cambridge.

1. *La legende de l'empereur Aśoka* pp. viii ff and 214.

2. *Legende,* p. 166.

The *Avadāna-śataka* is also a very early collection ; it is a Hīnayāna Sanskrit text believed to contain the utterances of the Buddha and is described as *sugatabhāṣitam ;* its redaction is ascribed to a certain Thandīśvarācārya of whom nothing is known[3]. This work was translated into Chinese in the third century A.D. (Nanjio No. 1324), and it mentions the *dīnāra.* The collection is therefore later than the Christian era, and about 100 A.D. has been suggested by Speyer as a good date for it. Speyer's edition is No. III of Bibliotheca Buddhica (2 vols. St. Petersburg, 1902-1909).

Many typical phrases and whole clauses are repeated in identical terms in both the collections, and such *clichés* have been held to belong to the ancient scripture of the oldest Buddhism. These have a more pronounced character in the *Avadānaśataka* and are everywhere fully written out whereas in the *Divyāvadāna* they are often abbreviated, being denoted by the words at the beginning and the end of the set phraseology. Examples of the topics of such clichés are, in the words of Speyer : 'the elaborate description of the smile of the Buddhas and its signification (Divy. 67, 16 ; 69, 27 ; 138, 1 ; 140, 7 ; 265, 16 ; 267, 7 ; 366, 24 ; 368, 17 ; 568, 7 ; 570, 1) ; the laudatory clause concerning the Buddhas looking over the wide world for somebody in distress whom they might rescue with a helping hand (*ibid.* 95, 11 ; 96, 6 ; 124, 11 ; 125, 5 ; 264, 25 ; 265, 14) ; the detailed account of the qualities of Arhatship subjoined to the narrative of the attainment of this high rank by somebody (*ibid.* 180, 21 ; 240, 22 ; 281, 28 etc.) ; the *verba concepta* to denote the conversion to the Saddharma (ibid. 46, 22 ; 71, 23 etc.) ; the attainment of the different degress of Srōtāpanna, Sakṛdāgāmin, etc. (*ibid.* 50, 7 ; 79, 25 ; 209, 14 etc.) ; the rationalistic commonplace on the natural causes of begetting children without the direct influence of some deity (*ibid.* 1, 5 ; 2, 24 ; 98, 18 ; 99, 17 etc.) and that on nurses (*ibid.* 3, 12 ; 58, 11 ; 99, 24 etc.) ; . . the phrases significative of a prosperous country and its king (*ibid.* 98, 14 ; 131, 17 etc.) and of a wealthy merchant (*ibid.* 1, 4 ;

3. I do not think that the colophon should be emended as Speyer suggests into Thandīśvarācāry(ena naṣṭa) pūrvam idānīm prakāśitam instead of ācāryapūrvam etc. as given in the mss.

24, 3 etc.); the standing turn about the Karmavipāka as an introduction to the stories of the past, told by the Buddha in reply to the demand of his monks (*ibid.* 54, 1 ;131, 7 ; 141, 7 *etc.*) ; and so on' (Speyer, ii Preface xvi-xvii). I may add that every one of the hundred stories in the *Avadānaśataka* opens with a *cliché* describing the Buddha and his followers and the honours of the narrative that follows :

In the following notes I seek to bring together and classify under convenient sections the data on social life that can be gathered from these two collections and offer brief comments on them calculated to show their interest to a student of Indian history and sociology.

I. CHILDREN, THEIR BIRTH, REARING AND EDUCATION

The love of progeny that has always had a strong hold over Hindu minds, the care of enciente women and the beliefs connected with child-birth, the nursing and rearing of children and their education are the topics of the first set of extracts we shall discuss. Most of these extracts are, as already stated, of the nature of clichés in set forms and are found repeated more than once ; they are therefore more conventional descriptions than realistic accounts, and we may not therefore accept them as literally correct and true to the facts of life ; even so, a study of them can give an index to those facts which have been idealized in these set phrases.

A rich *gṛhapati* (house-holder), expecting to become the father of a son, thinks in these terms of his imminent good fortune : apy evāhaṃ cirakālābhilaṣitaṃ putramukhaṃ paśyeyaṃ jāto me syān nāvajātaḥ, kṛtyāni me kurvīta bhṛtaḥ pratibibhṛyād dāyādyaṃ pratipadyeta kulavaṃśo me cirasthitiko bhaviṣyati, asmākaṃ cātyatītakālagatānām alpaṃ vā prabhūtaṃ vā dānāni dattvā puṇyāni kṛtvā dakṣiṇām ādeśayiṣyati (Divy. p. 2). That is to say : 'Shall I fulfil my long-cherished desire of seeing the face of a son ? and being born, will he turn out to be not a bad son ? Will he look after my business, support me in his turn after being brought up (by me), and inherit my estate ? Will my noble family last a long time ? and will he make gifts, great or small, for the benefit of myself and my ancestors who have departed long since, do good deeds for our merit and distribute rewards (to priests) ?' This is a very natural account of the aims and ambitions of a good *gṛhastha ;* the emphasis laid on the propitiation of ancestors and the continuity of the family is true to life ; this text is not a *cliché,* so far as I know, but a particular description of an individual's thought ; yet it is so typical.

One of the regrets of a *gṛhastha* who fails to beget a son is expressed in a *cliché* which runs :

'mamātyayāt sarva-svāpateyam aputrakam iti kṛtvā rājavidheyam bhaviṣyatīti (AVŚ. pp. 13, 195, 276).

Meaning, 'after my demise all (my) property, because it belongs to a son-less person, will be at the king's disposal'. Jolly has already pointed out that while the *Smrtis* know of a limited rule of escheat of heirless property to the king, rulers were often known to have availed themselves of a much more extended application of the rule ; and the cliché just cited goes a long way to confirm the correctness of Jolly's impression from other literary evidence to which he has referred in this work.[4]

Speyer has referred, as already seen, to the 'rationalistic commonplace on the natural causes of begetting children without the direct influence of a deity' ; this text is interesting in more ways than one, and may well be reproduced here. It reveals a whole system of folk-beliefs and practices that have not altogether disappeared even now. Of Balasena, a rich *gṛhapati* in Vāsavagrāma, we read :

> 'So 'putraḥ putrābhinandī Śiva-Varuṇa-Kuvera-Śakra-Brahmādīn āyācate | ārāmadevatāṃ vanadevatāṃ Śṛṅgāṭakadevatāṃ balipratigrāhikāṃ devatāṃ sahajāṃ sahadharmikāṃ nityānubaddhām api devatām āyācate | (Div. pp. 1 and 440).

It is noteworthy that the pantheon to which worship is offered by the householder for the sake of getting a son includes not only gods, but a number of minor godlings and local goddesses honoured by the people. In the Maitrakanyakāvadāna (xxxviii,

4. *Hindu Law and Custom,* pp. 188–9.

Div., p. 587), Mitra, a rich merchant, is said to have offered prayers to Rudra, Indra, Brahmā, Kāma and Kārtikeya; to have visited *tīrthas* and made gifts to Brāhmanas, besides observing many difficult *vratas*, purificatory penances (*anekaprakāra kāyacetasor āyāsakāribhirapi vratopavāsamaṅgalaiḥ*). Finally he gets a son by following the spiritual course prescribed for him by a Sādhupuruṣa. Our text, however, goes on to deprecate this belief that prayers produce children and to unfold the rationalistic causes of childbirth, which are by no means free from unfounded superstitions:

'asti caiṣa lokapravādo yadāyācanahetoḥ putrā jāyante duhitaraśceti. tacca naivam. yadevam abhaviṣyat ekaikasya putrasahasram abhaviṣyat tadyathā rājñaścakravartinaḥ'.

i.e., 'there is indeed this common talk among peeple that sons and daughters are born of prayers; that, however, is not so; if that were in fact the case, then each should have a thousand children like a cakravartī-king'. This is an allusion to the myth of the cakravartī ideal which I have discussed in some detail elsewhere.[5] The rational explanation of child-birth is as follows:

api tu trayāṇām sthānānām sammukhībhāvāt putrā jāyante duhitaraśca | katameṣām trayāṇām | mātāpitarau bhavataḥ samnipatitau, mātā (cāsya) kalyā bhavati ṛtumatī (ca) gandharvapratyupasthitā bhavatyeṣām trayāṇām sthānānām sammukhībhāvāt putrā jāyante duhitaraśca. (Div. p. 1.).

Here the birth of sons and daughters is ascribed to the co-operation of three factors—the meeting of the father and mother in love, the right timing of the mating (in relation to the period of the mother), and the approach of a *gandharva*, a term which obviously stands here for the soul after death and previous to its rebirth (Monier-Williams); that this is the true sense of *gandharva* in this context becomes clear from what follows almost immediately, viz.,

anyatamaśca sattvaḥ .... anyatamaṣamāt sattvanikāyāccyutvā tasyāḥ prajāpatyāḥ kukṣim avakrāntaḥ.

i.e., a certain being ...... having departed one of its body-forms has entered the womb of the conceiving mother.

5. NIA. Vol. III, no. 9, pp. 307—21.

An intelligent mother is said to be possessed of five separate characteristics in a curious passage, also of the nature of a cliché. (Div. pp. 2, 98-9, 440). It reads:

pañcaveṇikā dharmā ekatye paṇḍitajātīye mātṛgrāme | katame pañca | raktaṃ puruṣaṃ jānāti, viraktaṃ jānāti | kālaṃ jānāti, ṛtuṃ jānāti | garbham avakrāntaṃ jānāti | yasya sakāśād garbham avakrāmati taṃ jānāti | dārakaṃ jānāti dārikāṃ jānāti, sa ced dārako bhavati dakṣiṇam kukṣiṃ nisṛtya tiṣṭhati, sa ced dārikā bhavati vāmaṃ kukṣiṃ nisṛtya tiṣthai |

i.e., she knows if a man is in love or not, which is the proper time (for the sex act being fruitful), when fertilization has taken place, from whom this happens, and whether it is a boy or a girl that is coming, for a boy occupies the right side of the abdomen and a girl the left.

The care of a pregnant woman in high society forms the subject of another cliché which in spite of its highly conventional character seems to give some index to the ideas of comfort that prevailed among the well-to-do (Div. 2, 99):

āpannasatvāṃ ca tām viditvā uparipräsādatalagatām ayantritāṃ dhārayati śīte śītopakaraṇair uṣṇa uṣṇopakaraṇair vaidyaprajñaptair āhārair nātitiktair nātyamlair nātilavaṇair nātimadhurair nātikaṭukair nātikarāyais tiktāmlalavaṇamadhurakaṭukakaṣāyavivarjitair āhārair hārārdhahāravibhūṣitagātrīṃ Apsarasam iva Nandanavananavicāriṇīṃ mañcān mañcan pīṭhāt pīṭham avatarantīm uparimāṃ bhūmim | na cāsyā amanojñaśabdaśravaṇaṃ yāvad eva garbhasya paripākāya | sāṣṭānāṃ vā navānāṃ vā māśānām atyayāt prasūtā |

The emphasis laid here on a proper diet for women in the family way prescribed by medical opinion, and on their being protected from hearing harsh noises and unpleasant news conforms generally to current notions and practice in this matter, and persons in all strata of society do the best they can to secure these amenities. Notice that the text ends with the statement that the mother is delivered of the child at the end of eight or nine months. It may be noted that the comparison of the lady with an Apsarā in Nandavana, Indra's pleasure garden, the mention of the ornaments, *hāras and ardhahāras* worn by her, and above all the statement that she lived on the top floor of the house—*uparimāṃ*

bhūmim, lying on cots (*mañca*) and sitting on chairs (*pīṭha*), show that we have here the picture of life led among the upper classes. In fact high life is always described elsewhere in the *Divyāvadāna* and in other literary works as being led on upper storeys and terraces of palaces.

The newly born babe is said to be named on the 21st day after its birth by all the relatives (*jñātis*) assembled for the purpose (Div. 3, 24, 99). Manu (II. 30) prescribes the tenth or twelfth day after childbirth for the *nāma-karaṇa*, and Āpastamba the tenth day (Gr. 6, 15, 8), while according to other authorities and modern practice the naming of the child takes place on the eleventh day. In the Maitrakanyakāvadāna (Div. p. 589) the child is named after ten days.

tanayam uditacetā Maitrakanyābhidhānaṃ daśadivasapareṇa khyāpayāmāsa loke.

In all these cases the children were born in the families of Śreṣthis.

Another stock passage describes how a child, of course in rich families, is brought up by the care of eight different nurses (Div. pp. 3, 58) :

dvābhyām aṃśadhātrībhyāṃ, dvābhyāṃ krīḍanikābhyāṃ, dvābhyāṃ maladhātrībhyāṃ, dvābhyāṃ kṣīradhātrībhyāṃ so'ṣṭābhir dhātrībhir unnīyate vardhyate kṣīreṇa dadhnā navanītena sarpiṣā sarpimaṇḍenānyaiś cottaptottaptair upakaraṇaviśeṣair āśu vardhyate hradastham iva paṅkajam |

Of the eight nurses, two are for carrying the child about on their shoulder, two for playing with the child, two for washing the child and keeping him clean, and two are real nurses to feed him on their milk. The second sentence states that the child as he grows is brought up by these eight nurses on milk and milk products, and compares the growing child to a lotus growing in a pond. We are not, of course, to understand such texts literally or take them to be of universal application ; all the same they do provide a peep into the ideas entertained on the proper modes of bringing up children.

The duties of the *dhātris* (nurses) are fully explained in another context (Div. p. 475) where there are only four nurses involved, one instead of two for each specified set of duties. This passage also gives us an idea of the playthings given to children

to engage their attention and interest :

aṅka (not aṃśa) dhātrītyucyate yā dārakam aṅkena parikarṣayatyaṅgapratyaṅgāni ca saṃsthāpayati ; maladhātrītyucyate yā dārakaṃ snapayati cīvarakān malaṃ prapātayati ; stanyadhātrītyucyate yādārakaṃ stanyaṃ pāyayati ; krīḍāpanikā dhātrītyucyate yāni tāni dārakaṇāṃ dakṣakāṇāṃ taruṇakānāṃ krīḍāpanikāni bhavanti tadyathā akāyikā sakāyikā vitkoṭikā syapeṭārikā agharikā vaṃśaghaṭikā saṃdhāvaṇikā hastivigrahā aśvavigrahā balīvardavigrahāḥ, kathayanti dhanurgrāhāḥ kāṇḍakaṭacchupūrakūrcabhaiṣajyasthāvikāś ca purataḥ parikṛṣyante.

The *aṅka dhātrī* thus carries a child about seated astride on her hip and duly trains the growth and functioning of its limbs, major and minor ; the *mala-dhātrī* bathes the child, washes it whenever necessary, and keeps its clothes clean ; the third feeds it on her milk, while the last provides the child with toys of various kinds suited to the different stages of its development. Several terms used to describe the toys are obscure, and some may refer to games in which they are employed, a suggestion made by the editors of the *Divyāvadāna* in the index ; but we see that some of the toys had the shapes of elephants, horses and bulls.

To be understood with reservations also is the next passage that follows on the education of the child (*Div.* pp. 3, 58, 100, etc.):

sa yadā mahān saṃvṛttas tadā lipyām upanyastaḥ saṃkhyāyāṃ gaṇanāyāṃ mudrāyāṃ uddhāre nyāse nikṣepe vastuparīkṣāyām ratnaparīkṣāyām so 'ṣṭāsu parīkṣāsūdghaṭako vācakaḥ paṇḍitaḥ paṭupracāraḥ saṃvṛttaḥ.

A somewhat fuller version contains some more interesting items : after *nikṣepe* up to which the text is identical, we read :

hastiparīkṣāyāṃ aśvaparīkṣāyāṃ ratnaparīkṣāyāṃ dāruparīkṣāyāṃ vastraparīkṣāyāṃ puruṣaparīkṣāyāṃ strīparīkṣāyāṃ nānāpaṇyaparīkṣāsu paryavadātaḥ sarvaśāstrajñaḥ sarvakalābhijñaḥ sarvaśilpajñaḥ sarvabhūtarutajñaḥ sarvagatigatijñaḥ udghaṭṭako vācakaḥ paṇḍitaḥ paṭupracāraḥ paramatīkṣṇaniśitabuddhiḥ saṃvṛtto 'gnikalpa iva jñānena.

In both these instances, the education is that of children born in well-to-do merchant families. The thoroughly practical nature of the education subjects therefore deserves close attention. The three R-s come first—*lipi* (reading and writing), *saṃkhyā*— (arithmetic). *Gaṇanā* is accounting ; *mudrā* means 'money', and the

term seems to stand here for a knowledge of different types of money in use in commerce and the rates of exchange. The next three terms—*uddhāra, nyāsa,* and *nikṣepa,* relate to a knowledge of the law and practice relating to debts, deposits and trusts. Then we have the *aṣṭa parīkṣās,* of which we get the names of two *(vastu* and *ratna)* in the first citation, and of all the eight in the next; comparing the two passages it seems probable that *vastu* in the first passage is a misreading for *vastra,* and the full list of the eight *parīkṣās* (inspection, testing) thus relates to: *hasti* (elephant), *aśva* (horse), *ratna* (gems), *dāru* (wood), *vastra* (cloth), *puruṣa* (man), *strī* (woman), *nānāpaṇya* (merchandise of all sorts). There was evidently a considerable volume of technical knowledge of an empirical kind, which was the content of the *vārttāśāstra* of which the merchants of the land availed themselves. The mention of man and woman among objects to be inspected and tested with an expert eye should cause no surprise when we recall the ancient lore of *sāmudrikalakṣaṇa* which purported to determine quality, character and fortune from a study of bodily marks. A glance at contents of cyclopædic works like the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira will go far to show that such lists of subjects were by no means figments of the literary imagination, but had a fair correspondence to the reality of studies pursued in schools. The second list adds more general items which seem to be more embellishments than anything else, viz., knowledge of all sciences, *(śāstras),* all arts *(kalās),* all fine arts *(śilpa),* the noises of all creatures *(bhūtaruta),* and gaits of all moving beings *(gatigati).* Both lists wind up with the mention of learning *(paṇḍita)* and eloquence *(paṭu-pracāra)* as the result of the entire training, while the second text puts a point upon the whole by comparing to a bright fire the finished scholar with his sharpened intellectual powers and superior knowledge. Texts like these raise a presumption that the generations of *śrēṣṭhīs* and *sārthavāhas* whose magnificient benefactions alone rendered possible the splendid efflorescence of Buddhist architecture and sculpture in different parts of India were no mere money bags thirsting for vulgar display of their riches, but the proud custodians of a many-sided culture, second to none in its polished humanism. No wonder, the art they patronised, is all that it is.

Besides the course of education detailed above, a *kṣatriya* born

to rule a kingdom had other courses of instruction to follow. The attainments of a prince Mahāpraṇāda by name are said to have included the following (*Div.*, p. 58):

Silpasthānakarmasthānāni, tad yathā hastiśikṣāyām aśvapṛṣṭhe rathe śare dhanuṣi prayāṇe niryāṇe 'ṅkuśagrahe pāśagrahe tomaragrahe yaṣṭibandhe muṣṭibandhe padabandhe śikhābandhe dūravedhe marmavedhe 'kṣuṇṇavedhe dṛḍhaprahāritāyāṃ pañcasu sthāneṣu kṛtāvī saṃvṛttah.

It will be noticed that all this is purely martial education —training of elephants, riding, charioteering, bowmanship and the dexterous and effective use of other weapons known to the military science of the day. In the *Jātakas,* Takṣaśilā is frequently mentioned as the seat of a celebrated military school.

On Brahmin's education we have the following interesting passage (*Div.*, p. 485) about Mahāpanthaka, a Brahmin lad of Śrāvastī:

sa yadā mahān samvṛttas tadā lipyām upanyastaḥ saṃkhyāyāṃ gaṇanāyāṃ mudrāyāṃ brāhmaṇikāyāṃ īryāyāṃ caryāyāṃ śauce samudācāre bhasmagrahe autkare bhoskāre ṛgvede yajurvede sāmavede 'tharvavede yajane yājane 'dhyayane 'dhyāpane dāne pratigrahe ṣaṭkarmanirato brāhmaṇaḥ saṃvṛttaḥ / sa pañcaśatagaṇaṃ brāhmaṇakarma oṃ vācayitum ārabdhaḥ/

From this we see that besides the three R-s the education of the Brahmin children embraced the rules of asceticism *(iryā),* mendicancy *(caryā),* ceremonial purity *(śauca),* of good social form *(samudācāra),* and of proper modes of address *(bhoskāra)* besides the better known study of the Vedas—all the four are named here—and the practice of six-fold Brahminical duties. I am not sure of the meaning of *bhasmagraha* and *autkara* , and would leave these terms alone now. The last sentence which is intriguing at first sight because of the colloquialism *'oṃ vācayitum ārabdhaḥ'*—such colloquial uses are legion in the *avadānas*—simply means that the young man began to put into practice whatever he had learned, and to officiate in the numberless ceremonials in which brahmins generally officiate. The large number of the ceremonies is indicated again in the usual conventional manner by invoking the number 500 so familiar in all Buddhist books, and likely to meet us often again in the following extracts. The number may refer

also to brahmins that took part in the ceremonies rather than to the ceremonies themselves.

This learned brahmin Mahāpanthaka had an idiot of a son Panthaka who did not make good at school. The description of his failure, and of his teacher's report on his work (*Div.*, p. 486) has a quaint interest :

sa yadā mahān saṃvṛttas tadā lipyām upanyastaḥ / tasya sīty ukte dham iti vismarati / atha tasyācāryaḥ kathayati / brāhmaṇa mayā prabhūtadārakāḥ pāṭhayitavyāḥ / na śakṣyāmy ahaṃ Panthakaṃ pāṭhayitum / Mahāpanthakasyālpaṃ ucyate prabhūtaṃ gṛhṇāti asya tu Panthakasya sītyukte dham iti vismarati.

When the teacher began the first lessons in reading and writing (*lipi*), the boy's inability to profit by instruction was patent. The lesson starts with the two letters *siddham* believed to be of magical import and meaning accomplished, fulfilled ; Panthaka proved himself incapable of retaining the two letters together in his mind, forgetting the one when he mastered the other. In his despair, the teacher tells the father (addressed brāhmaṇa in the text above) that as he has many pupils to teach, he cannot be wasting his time on trying to teach the uneducable Panthaka. The father considers the situation and the manner in which he is said to have met it, is also of value as revealing that the relative esteem in which the *vyutpanna* (scholar) and the mere *śrōtrīya* (one who learns Veda by rote) were held, was not very different then from that of recent times ; the father consoles himself with the thought that not all Brahmins are skilled in *lipi* and *akṣara*, and that his son might as well be Vedabrāhmaṇa, and sends him to a teacher of the Veda. Here is the text :

brāhmaṇaḥ saṃlakṣayati / (na), sarve brāhmaṇā lipyakṣarakuśalā bhavanti Vedabrāhmaṇa eṣa bhaviṣyati / sa tenādhyāpakasya vedaṃ pāṭhayituṃ samarpitaḥ /

But once again Panthaka proves a disappointment, and proves himself unequal to mastering even the *vyāhṛtis—Oṃ Bhūrbhuvaḥsuvaḥ*, and the teacher of the Veda also reports to the parent his inability to teach Panthaka, saying :

asya om ityukte bhūr iti vismarati bhūr ityukte om iti vismarati.

Poor Panthaka remains totally unlettered for life. And the last consolation the father finds for himself in the situation is that not all Brahmins are learned in the Veda, and that his son may yet continue to be a Brahmin by birth :

na sarve brāhmaṇā vedapāragā bhavanti, jātibrāhmaṇa evāyaṃ bhaviṣyati.

In a description of a rich and learned brahmin of Śrāvastī, the Avadāna-śataka (II p. 19) says the following of his learning :

trayāṇāṃ vedānām pāragaḥ sanighaṇṭakaiṭabhānām sākṣaraprabhedānām itihāsapañcamānām padaśo vyākaraṇaḥ.

i.e., he was fully conversant with the three vedas, *nighaṇṭu*, *kaiṭabha* (a class of writings) and *itihāsas*, and could expound them word by word. The text as it stands is not free from difficulties, though the general sense is what has just been indicated. The word *vyākaraṇaḥ* at the end must be understood, as Speyer says, in the unusual sense of 'expounder' or possibly it is a mistake for *vaiyākaraṇaḥ* which occurs in a similar context in the *Divyāvadāna* which will be cited below. Again, the compound *itihāsapañcamānām* is usually taken to mean 'the group of which *itihāsa* is the fifth i.e., the four Vedas and *itihāsa*, and yet we have reference to the three Vedas in the same sentence. Now to the similar text in the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 619) which is also a description of the attainments of Triśaṅku, a Mātaṅgarāja living on the bank of the Ganges, and contains a longer and more curious list of them ; the Mātaṅgarāja (low-caste king) is said to have recollected his learning of a previous birth :

sa punar bhikṣavas Triśaṅkur Mātaṅgarājaḥ pūrvajanmādhītān vedān samanusmarati sma sāṅgopāṅgān sarahasyān sanighaṇṭukaitabhān sākṣaraprabhedān itihāsapañcamān anyāni ca śāstrāṇi padaka (śo) 'vaiyākaraṇo lokāyatikayajñamantre mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇe niṣṇāto niṣkāṅṣo bhāṣāyāṃ ca yathādharmaṃ vedavratapadāny anuśrutaṃ ca bhāṣate sma.

Holidays in schools were called *apāṭha* (no lessons). How the pupils spent their time on such days is briefly described in one sentence (*Div.*, p 487) :

ācaritaṃ teṣāṃ māṇavakānāṃ yadā apāṭhā bhavanti te kadācin nagarāvalokonayā gacchanti kadācit tīrthopasparśakā gacchanti kadācit samidhāhārakā gacchanti—

i.e., it was the rule with those pupils on holidays sometime to go out and look round the city, sometime to go for bathing in sacred *tīrthas,* and sometime to fetch fuel (for sacrifice). It is noteworthy how closely this account conforms to impressions received from casual references to such things in the dramas and *kāvyas* of classical sanskrit literature. No wonder schoolboys all the world over have looked forward to holidays at all times not only as escape from the drudgery of their routine studies, but as welcome chances of merry-making.

One final extract before we leave education which shows that the Buddhist scripture was repeated from memory just like the Vedas and in fact any other matter that was taught in old Indian schools by teachers to their pupils, and that, the term *svādhyāya* was employed to describe the process of learning and repeating by rote just as it was in Brahmanical schools :

athāyuṣmān Śroṇo Bhagavatā kṛtāvakāśaḥ asmāt parāntikayā guptikayā udānāt pārāyaṇāt satyadṛṣṭaḥ (sthāveragāthā) śailagāthā munigāthā arthavargīyāṇi ca sūtrāṇi vistareṇa svareṇa svādhyāyaṃ karoti.

It is not always realised that Buddhism had very much in common with Hinduism in its doctrines, institutions and practices, and that the whole of its development, spread and decline in India is, on a strictly correct view just a chapter, though indeed a very significant and instructive chapter, in the history of Hinduism.

II

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION, TRADE, TRANSPORT, ETC.

The rich merchant as we have seen, plays a big part in the stories narrated in the *avadānas,* and it is consequently of some interest to see what we can gather from them about the means of communications and transport, voyages by sea, and generally the conditions of trade that prevailed at the time. What we gather thus is, curiously enough, not much, but considering the nature

of our source and the very casual manner in which the facts are mentioned, their accuracy is beyond reproach, and hence they may be accepted without hesitation as perfectly true to life.

The *ghaṇṭā* (bell) was used to draw the attention of people when public announcements were made. For announcements to the members of the Saṅgha, however, a *gaṇḍī* (gong) seems to have been preferred ; thus the expression *gaṇḍīdeśanakāla, lit.* the time of giving the sign with the gong, i.e., meal-time, occurs thrice in the *Avadānaśakata* (ii p. 95, 1. 1 and n), and once in the abbreviated form *gaṇḍīkāla* (p. 264, 1. 8), which seems to give us a glimpse into the eager expectancy with which this time was anticipated by some of the monks and their alacrity in communicating its arrival to their absentminded fellows. The *gaṇḍī* was also used to summon the monks to general gatherings of the chapter, more than one *gaṇḍī* being employed simultaneously for the purpose if the members were scattered over distances which could not be reached by the sound of one (*Av.* II 87 ; *Div.* p. 335). In one instance we find the *gaṇḍī* employed in funeral, and here it is specially called *muṇḍikā gaṇḍī* which Feer has rendered into *'la cloche funèbres'*. The whole sentence (*Av.* I, p. 272) reads :

tato'sya sabrahmacāribhir muṇḍikām gaṇḍīṃ parāhatya śarīrābhinirhāraḥ kṛtaḥ.

i.e., then his (the dead man's) class-fellows sounded the funerary gong and carried his body for burial.

The *ghaṇṭā* was used like tomtoms for making proclamations in public streets. A leading merchant who was thinking of embarking on a sea-voyage used to announce his intention publicly and invite other merchants to join him, and he offered concessions to them to induce them to do so. On the occasion of his son's departure on such a maritime venture, the action taken by Balasena is described as follows (*Div.*, p. 4) :

Balasena-gṛhaptinā Vāsavagrāmake ghaṇṭāvaghoṣanaṃ kṛtaṃ yo yuṣmākaṃ utsahate Śroṇena Koṭīkarṇena sārthvāhena sārdham aśulkenātarapaṇyena mahāsamudram avatartuṃ sa mahāsamudragamanīyaṃ paṇyaṃ samudānayatu.

i.e., Balasena, the householder, had the bell rung in the village of Vāsavagrāma to proclaim 'whoever amongst you is willing to enter the great ocean along with the chief merchant Śroṇa Koṭīkarṇa without having to pay any duties or fares on merchandise,

let him bring up merchandise suitable for ocean transport'. What shall we not give to get a list of the articles that comprised such merchandise. The two collections on which this study is based do not seem to contain any such list. But let us proceed without vain regrets, and being grateful for what we do get from these books. The response to Balasena's proclamation is given thus :

pañcabhir baṇikśatair mahāsamudragamanīyaṃ paṇyaṃ samudānītam.

i.e., 500 merchants turned up in response to the call. This sounds strange, considering that Vāsavagrāma was only a small village, not even a *grāma* but a *grāmaka.* But the same response is said to have attended a similar call by Sārthavāha Pūrṇa in the *nagara* of Sūrpāraka (Souparaka in *Av.* ii, p. 16). The fact is that, as scholars familiar with Buddhist literature have often pointed out, the number 500 is conventional, and wherever it occurs, it must be understood as meaning 'many' ; the Buddha is always surrounded by 500 *bhikṣus* wherever he goes !

To return to Balasena's dispositions on behalf of his son. The first thought of the father is about the kind of vehicle his son should ride on his way to the sea-port. He considers three types of vehicles—those drawn by elephants, by horses and by asses, and elects the last variety, because elephants and horses are delicate and difficult to maintain, while asses are both delicate and sensible (?) I am not quite sure of the meanings of even words that have a common look, for the colloquial style of the stories of the *Divyāvadāna* have nuances unknown to classical sanskrit, and will, as usual, reproduce the text and let the reader judge :

Balaseno nāma gṛhaptatiḥ saṃlakṣayati kīdṛśena yānena Śroṇaḥ Koṭikarṇo yāsyati / sa saṃlakṣayati / sa ced dhastibhir hastinah sukumārā durbharāśca, aśvā api sukumārā durbharāśca, gardabhāḥ smṛtimantaḥ sukumārāśca, gardabha-yānēna gacchatviti : (Div., p. 4. also p. 7)

The march to the seaport even in company was not without its own problems and dangers. First there was the question of the means of transporting the merchandise. The way this was done is described thus (*Div.*, p. 5) :

Śakaṭair bhārair moṭaiḥ piṭakair uṣṭrair gobhir gardabhaiḥ prabhūtaṃ samudragamanīyaṃ paṇyaṃ āropya mahāsamudraṃ saṃprasthitaḥ,

i.e., he loaded plenty of merchandise suited for ocean traffic in carts, loads, bundles and baskets, and on (the backs of) camels, oxen and asses, and started for the ocean. We have perhaps to take it that merchandise packed in bundles and loads were put into carts, and the rest slung on the backs of the animals mentioned, for in another context (*Div.*, p. 232) we hear only of carts, camels, oxen, asses and so on. The trade routes are generally described (*ibid)* as passing through *grāma, nagara, nigama, palli* and *pattana,* though we seem to get no concrete indications of the difference of these categories of population-centres.

Evidently the vehicles on which merchants rode, the carts loaded with merchandise and pack of animals all together constituted a caravan which wended its way to its destination with almost procession-like slowness. And Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa is advised by his father Balasena to keep to the middle of the caravan, as a strong robber attacks its front while a weak one takes its rear, thus :

putra na tvaya sārthasya purastād gantavyaṃ nāpi pṛṣṭhataḥ, yadi balavāṃś cauro bhavati sārthasya purastān nipatati, durbalo bhavati pṛṣṭhato nipatati, tvayā sārthasya madhye gantavyaṃ' (*Div.*, p. 4).

This is followed by the somewhat enigmatic statement :

'na ca te sārthavāhe hataḥ sārtho vaktavyaḥ' which seems to mean : 'and you should not tell the Caravan leader of any loss sustained by any member of it'—the whole advice points to the path of prudence, 'the deadliest of sins', little thinking of what would happen if every one were to practise prudence to the same extent ! Robbers did not constitute the sole hindrance to trade on land. We hear of one instance (*Av.* i. 71) in which a whole caravan lost its way on a desert path ; they had exhausted their provisions for the journey (*pathyadana)* and suffered intensely from hunger and the heat of the sun. But as this description is calculated to afford a setting for what follows, viz., the futility of prayers to Śiva, Varuṇa, Kuvera, Vāsava and others, and the miracle that followed immediately on their seeking the Buddha's aid in accordance with the suggestion of a solitary *upāsaka* among them who was proficient in the Buddhaśāsana, we may well hesitate to accept the picture as the true representation of a real situation.

But the fear of dangers in sea-faring seems to have been very real, and this is made clear in many ways. There is, for instance,

the description of Śroṇa Koṭīkarṇa's leave-taking of his mother (*Div.*, 4-5); on the eve of his departure, the son goes to the mother, and after prostrating before her he tells her that he is going for a sea-voyage; the mother begins to weep, expressing doubts about her seeing him again after his safe return; the son manages to stop the scene only by chiding her:

'amba ahaṃ kṛtakautūhalamaṅgalasvastyayano mahāsamudraṃ samprasthitaḥ/ tvaṃ cedṛśānyamaṅgalāni karoṣi. .

i.e., 'mother I have started for (going on) the great sea after the completion of all the usual auspicious rites, and you start doing these inauspicious things!' In another story (*Div.*, 590-2) the mother of Maitrakanyaka withholds from her son the knowledge of his father's death at sea, for fear that if he learnt that his father had engaged in maritime trade, he too might start doing so; but the enormous gains that Maitrakanyaka made in other lines of local trade, viz., those of a pedlar, perfume-seller and money-changer made the other merchants of his city jealous of his prosperity and desirous of seeing him out of their way, and so they contrived to tell him the truth regarding his father's calling, and the mother laments this jealous and mischievous act of the rival merchants. The poignant words of the mother, already bereft of her husband and now dreading the threatened loss of her son in the ocean, deserve to be reproduced in part:

Vatsa kena tavākhyātaṃ vinākāraṇaśatruṇā /
Jīvitaṃ kasya te'niṣṭaṃ tvayā krīḍāṃ karoti kaḥ //
daivāt kathaṃcit samprāptaṃ cakṣur ekaṃ tvam adya me /
na yāvad evaṃ mama duḥkhaśalyaṃ
prayāti nāśaṃ pravidārya śokam /
putrakleśabhāginyā mṛtyunā hariyase'dhunā //
kathaṃ nu tasyopari me dvitīyaṃ
nipātyate pāpamayair amitraiḥ //

'Child! which person, turning enemy for no cause, has told you of this? Who does not like that you should live? Who wants to play with your life? To-day you are my only eye, somehow bestowed on me by fate; and now you are being taken away by death from me, destined to be bereft of my son. No sooner has the shaft of my misery disappeared after causing my misery to burst asunder, than do my sinful enemies hurl on me this second (trouble).' But the importunities of the mother leave the son unmoved, and when he actually departs on the voyage, the mother is said to have wailed aloud and beaten her breasts (*ib.* p. 593). Another merchant exposed to the danger of ship-wreck from a storm wistfully recalls the advice which he got from his brothers to the effect that many enter the sea blinded by avarice, but few return—advice which he disregarded at the time and took to sea:

bhavanto 'haṃ bhrātrābhihito mahāsamudro 'lpāsvādo bahvā dīnavas tṛṣṇāndhā bahavo 'vataranti svalpā vyutpatsyanti na tvayā kenacit prakāreṇa mahāsamudram avatartavyam iti so'haṃ tasya vacanam avacanam kṛtvā mahāsamudram avatīrṇaḥ kim idānīṃ karomi.

As this merchant was expressing his belated remorse for his foolish disregard of his brother's warnings, his companions were addressing prayers to different deities to ensure their safety. (*Div.* p. 41). Yet another instance occurs in which the departing merchant takes leave of his friends and relations and finds difficulty in consoling his wife before he goes, and then loses his life in his venture (*Div.*, p. 301). In fact the successful completion of each voyage was looked upon as a great and fortunate achievement, and this was described by the specific phrase *siddhayātra,* a term which occurs in some old inscriptions in Malaya and Sumatra and has been subject of some discussion in recent years.* Some merchants had the lucky touch and completed several sea-voyages with conspicuous success, and they were in great demand as their presence on board a ship was believed to serve as a talisman; Pūrṇa of Śūrpāraka was one such lucky person, and after he had completed six voyages, and had practically retired from the field, some merchants from Śrāvastī went to Śūrpāraka and persuaded Pūrṇa to embark with them on a seventh voyage (*Div.*, p. 34). Pūrṇa has made his pile, and is not inclined to go out again; but the merchants are importunate and say they had come a long way with him in their mind; hence pūrṇa makes up his mind to go for their sake, though he is by no means in need of money—*kiṃcāpy ahaṃ dhanenānarthī tathāpy eṣām arthāyāvatarāmi/*

Before leaving the subject of maritime trade, we may notice one short passage occuring twice in the *Avadānaśataka* (i. 200 and ii 61) and giving some idea of the crew that manned the vessels

* Journal of Greater India Society, Vol. IV, pp. 128-36.

sailing on the high seas. The text has obviously suffered in transcription, assistance is derived from a Tibetan version of it. The sanskrit text runs thus :

sa pañcabhiḥ purāṇaśatair vahanam bhṛtva pañca pauruṣeyān gṛhītvā' hāram nāvikam kaivartam karṇadhāram ca trirapi ghaṇṭāvaghoṣaṇam kṛtvā mahāsamudramavatīrṇaḥ.

i.e., 'Having hired a boat for five hundred *purāṇas,* and procured the five classes of men (crew), viz., *āhāra, nāvika, kaivarta* and *karṇadhāra,* and having proclaimed (his project) thrice with the sound of the bell, he then entered the great sea'. It will be noticed that while five classes of crew are mentioned, only four are named. Speyer, the editor of this text, writes the following note on this point : 'M. Feer names indeed five categories of the crew in his translation, where he writes (p. 134, 12) *'Un e'quipage quintuple, consistant en pompiers, rameurs, pecheurs, vigie, pilote',* (a fivefold crew consisting of pump-makers, oarsmen, fishermen, look-out men, and pilot). If this translation which rests also on the Tibetan version, is to be relied on, the Sanskrit term corresponding to *'vigie'* seems to have been lost. Yet from a private communication of the late M. Feer I have got the information that the meaning of the Tibetan terms is rather uncertain ; instead of *'vigie'* he rather translates : *'celui qui bouche less trous'* one who stops holes'. The sanskrit term *āhāra* is by no means clear in the context, and the term corresponding to it in Feer's version is pump-maker. It will be noted that the text cited gives only the classes of workmen who made up the crew, but does not give the strength of the crew.

The term *avadraṅga,* which the Lexicons explain as a market, occurs as the name of a tax in the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 32-3). Here is a conversation between Pūrṇa and some merchants who had just reached Śūrpāraka after a successful voyage :

pṛcchati bhavantaḥ kim idaṃ dravyam iti / te kathayanti / idaṃ cedaṃ ceti / kiṃ mūlyam / te kathayanti / sārthavāha dūram api param api gatvā tvam eva praṣṭavyaḥ / yady apy evaṃ tathāpy ucyatāṃ mūlyam / tair aṣṭādaśa suvarṇalakṣā mūlyam upadiṣṭam / sa kathayati / bhavantas tisro lakṣā avadraṅgaṃgṛhṇīta, mamaitat paṇyam, avaśiṣṭaṃ dāsyāmi / tathā bhavatu / tena tisro lakṣā ānāyya dattāḥ / svamudrālakṣitaṃ ca kṛtvā prakrāntaḥ /

This text not only indicates the proper meaning of *avadraṅga,* earnest money, but gives a glimpse into some trade practices, and also affords a good example of the kind of colloquial language in which the early *avadānas* in Sanskrit are couched. Let us set down a translation of the passage : " (Pūrṇa) asks : 'Gentlemen, what is this merchandise ?' They say—'this and this'. 'What (is the) price ?' They say : 'Merchant Lord, you have indeed to be asked everywhere (to fix the price)' 'Even so, name your price'. They quoted the price as eighteen lakhs of *suvarṇas.* He says : 'Gentlemen, take an earnest *(avadraṅga)* of three lakhs ; this merchandise is mine'. I shall pay the balance later. 'Be it so'. Then he brought three lakhs (of money) and gave it to them, and having sealed the merchandise with his seal, he left." This is a wholesale transaction ; the courtesy shown by the vendors to the big merchant Pūrṇa, their readiness to accept a price named by the buyer, the buyer's readiness on the other hand to accept the price named by the vendors, the payment of the earnest money which is a sixth of the total value agreed on before the merchandise is sealed by the vendee with his own seal, are all obviously details true to life.

We have some more details of interest in the same context. The wholesale purchase made by Pūrṇa happened to be in direct violation of a resolution made by the merchants of Śūrpāraka a little earlier at a meeting which Pūrṇa had not attended. So when the other merchants of the city sent their men to find out from the new arrivals the nature and value of the merchandise they had brought in, they found out that Pūrṇa had forestalled them. In fact their messengers were treated with scant courtesy by the vendors. Let us go back to the text which has a quaint flavour of its own :

tato baṇiggrāmeṇāvacarakāḥ puruṣāḥ preṣitāḥ / paśyata kiṃ dravyam iti / tair gatvā pṛṣṭāḥ / kiṃ dravyam / idaṃ cedaṃ ca / asmākam api pūrṇāni kośakoṣṭhāgārāṇi tiṣṭhanti / pūrṇāni vā bhavantu mā vāpi, vikrītam / kasyāntike / Pūrṇasya / prabhūtam āsādayiṣyatha pūrṇasyāntikād vikrīya / te kathayanti / yat tenāvadraṅge dattaṃ tad yūyaṃ mūlye 'pi na dāsyatha / kiṃ tenāvadraṅge dattam / tisraḥ suvarṇalakṣāḥ / sumuṣitās tena bhrātaraḥ kṛtāḥ / tair āgatya baṇiggrāmasyārocitam /

The messengers of the merchants' association of Śūrpāraka ap-

parently begin the usual process of higgling by saying that their stores were full and that they were not eager to buy and so on, and they are cut short by the merchants from abroad who tell them sharply that they are not interested in the condition of the warehouses of the merchants of Śurpāraka as their merchandise was all sold already; and when the men ask if the sale fetched them a good profit, again quick as shot comes the rejoinder that the merchant-guild would not pay for the total value even as much as Pūrṇa had paid them as earnest. The news is duly conveyed to the guild which is greatly upset thereby; when it sends for Pūrṇa and accuses him of having disregarded the resolution (*kriyākāra*) that merchants of Śūrpāraka should not conclude any bargains individually with merchants from outside, Pūrṇa defends himself by saying that neither he nor his brother was summoned to the meeting where the resolution was passed and that consequently he was no party to it; he roundly asserts that only those who were parties to the resolution were bound by it, and his words may be cited in the original:

bhavanto yadā yuṣmābhiḥ kriyākāraḥ kṛtas tadā kim ahaṃ na śabdito mama bhrātā vā / yuṣmābhir eva kriyākāraḥ kṛto yūyam eva pālayata /

And his position was upheld as correct by the ruler of Śūrpāraka when the matter went up to him.

Coined money was doubtless in common use in many parts of India especially in the north-west and north by the time the *Avadānaśataka* was compiled; yet one reference in this work to such money called *Suvarṇa* as above and bearing perhaps the image of the ruler on it is of sufficient interest to be noted here. It occurs in the story of Hiraṇyapāṇi (Golden-hand) who was born with golden coins in his palms; the coins reappeared as often as they were removed. Of him it is said that, when he went into the streets of Śrāvastī, Brāhmaṇas, Śramaṇas, the poor and needy crowded round him; he stretched out his palms and they were satisfied with the heaps of *suvarṇas* adorned with effigy and all which they were able to appropriate for themselves, and the whole city resounded with the fame of Hiraṇyapāṇi (*A. V.* ii, p. 74):

Sa yada vīthīmavatīrṇo bhavati tadā śramaṇa-brāhmaṇa-kṛpaṇa-vanīpakān dṛṣṭvā pāṇidvayam prasārayati / tato lakṣaṇāhatasya hiraṇyasuvarṇasya rāśiḥ prādurbhavati yena tān saṃtarpayati / tasya yaśasā sarvā Śrāvastī āpūrṇā /.

III
POLITY

We shall now turn to a consideration of extracts calculated to throw light on political thought, administration, taxation and allied matters. The ideal of good rule and the social and economic conditions prevailing in a country subject to such rule form the subject of a stock passage which is found repeated fairly frequently. It reads:

sphītam ca kṣemam ca subhikṣam ca ākīrṇabahujana-manuṣyam ca praśānta-kali-kalaha-ḍimba-ḍamaram taskararogāpagatam śālikṣu-go-mahiṣī-sampannam dhārmiko dharmarājo dharmarājyam kārayati (Av. i. p. 120).

The land described here is flourishing and prosperous, well-populated and perfectly peaceful; there are no quarrels among men, no thieves and no disease; there is an abundance of fine rice, sugar-cane, cows and milch-buffaloes; such a kingdom it is that a *dhārmic* king rules in *dhārmic* ways. Obviously texts like this are utopian in character, and it is easy to dismiss them as wild imaginings with no bearing on the realities of life. But a little reflection shows that in fact these apparently impossible ideals exerted a tangible influence on the conduct of all truly great rulers of India. Such ideas formed the political myths of Ancient India, and the present generation can have little difficulty in realising the power of myths on human conduct. Look at the force generated by words like Empire, Führer, Communism, and symbols like the Union Jack, Svastika and Hammer & Sickle! Can it be said that the title of Dharma-rāja, or Dharma-mahārāja as it is put in inscriptions, made no appeal to the minds of the people of ancient India, and their born leaders? Think of Aśoka and his work, or of the hundreds of epigraphs in which rulers from all parts of the country and of all ages proclaim their faith in *dharma*

and act in conformity with their faith, at least on the occasions when they put up these records, and the effect of the ideals of *dhārmic* rule on practical affairs would stand self-revealed. Of course the reality always fell short of the ideal; but without the ideal, and the effort to live as near it as may be, where will humanity be? The text cited above is the Indian way of exhorting kings to promote the economic welfare of their subjects and ensure harmony in society. Āpastamba, it may be noted, is quite explicit, and says in so many words that the king should see to it that no one starved in his country from want or failed to get attention in disease.

The next extract to be considered depicts the very opposite of the felicitous conditions of life supposed to prevail in a *dharma-rājya*; in fact it bears on famines, which seem to have been by no means infrequent in an extensive country whose public finance was described, not long ago, as 'a gamble in the rain'. Our agriculture, the mainstay of our economy to this day, has always depended on the rainfall; even a single season of draught causes a felt deficit in food supply, and failure of rain for a number of years running necessarily resulted in acute famine and enormous loss of life, especially in times when large scale irrigation works and rapid transport were unknown. And the schematic classification of famines contained in the passage cited below demonstrates that Indian thaught did not flinch from applying even to the seamy side of life its well known capacity to erect logically complete systems. Here is the text (*Div.* pp. 131-2):

trividhaṃ durbhikṣaṃ bhaviṣyati cañcu śvetāsthi śalākāvṛtti ca / tatra cañcu ucyate samudgake tasmin manuṣyā vījāni prakṣipyānāgate sattvāpekṣayā sthāpayanti mṛtanām, anena te vījakāyaṃ kariṣyantīti / idaṃ samudgakaṃ baddhvā cañcu ucyate / śvetāsthi nāma durbhikṣaṃ tasmin kāle manuṣyā asthīny upasaṃhṛtya tāvat kvāthayanti yāvat tāny asthīni śvētāni saṃvṛttānīti, tatastat kvāthaṃ pivanti / idaṃ śvetāsthi durbhikṣam ity ucyate / śalākāvṛttirnāma tasmin kāle manuṣyāḥ khalu vilebhyo dhānyaguḍakāni śalākayākṛṣya bahūdakasthālyām kvāthayitvā pivanti / iyaṃ śalākāsaṃbaddhatvāc chalākāvṛttir ity ucyate /

This may be translated as follows: 'Famines fall into three classes—*cañcu* (casket), white-bone, and living by splinters. Now *cañcu* is employed in the sense of casket; men put grain in a casket and leave it as provision for the dead with the idea that they will

live upon it in after life; being connected with the casket * this famine is called 'casket'. 'White bone' famine is like this: in this period men gather together bones and boil them in water till they turn white, and then drink the fluid; this is called 'white bone' famine. In the famine called 'living by splinters' men dig up bits of grains from holes with the aid of splinters, boil the grain in a cauldron holding a large quantity of water, and then drink it; being connected with splinters, it is called 'living by splinters'.

The severity of the famine is marked by the shifts to which men are driven to save themselves from death by starvation; in the first instance they are supposed to rummage the graves of the dead and eat the grain found in caskets left there as burial offerings: the funerary practices mentioned here are not without interest as evidence of survival of burial, partial if not total, to a relatively late period, long after cremation is supposed to have come into general vouge. The two further stages call for no comment. It may be noted here that the *Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga* contain relaxations of the normal rules regarding acceptance of alms by the *bhikkhus* during times of scarcity, *MV.* vi, 19, 2; 32, 2. *Cullavagga*, VI, 21 is particularly interesting; it notes that there was a scarcity in Rājagṛha, and as the people were unable to provide food for the whole *saṅgha*, they were allowed to send food to the *vihāra* to a particular *bhikkhu* for his use, or to invite selected *bhikkhus* to their houses and so on; it mentions the Chabbaggiya Bhikkus who secured the better kind of food for themselves and left the poorer sorts for the followers of Gautama; above all, it notes the Buddha's permission to the Saṅgha to appoint a *bhatta-uddesaka,* apportioner of food-rations, who was to arrange the food in small heaps and fasten tickets or marks upon the heaps to indicate the allotment.

anujānāmi bhikkhave salākaya vā paṭṭikaya vā upanibandhitvā opuñjitvā uddisitum ti. (Oldenberg, *Vin.* ii, p. 176).

Dr. V. Raghavan has drawn my attention to the fact that *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (IV, p. 323) mentions a famine at Nālandā and uses the terms *dvīhitakā* (for our *cañcu*), *setatthikā* and *salākāvatta.* Sten Konow explains *salākāvatta* correctly at p. 128 of JPTS, 1909, whereas the translator of the *Aṅguttaranikāya, The Book of*

* The word *baddhvā* seems to be used in this sense. Cf. *śalākāsambaddhatvāt* at the end.

Gradual Sayings, i, 143, relying on a late commentary has gone wrong in explaining the text which speaks of *dussassam* (bad crops), *setatthi*, and *salākāvattam*. The last term by the way is different from *salākābhattam*.

That the practice of voting prevailed among religious orders, particularly the Buddhist Saṅgha is well known. In fact it is so much associated with the Saṅgha that it has been a matter of some doubt whether the Saṅgha adopted a practice prevailing among tribal republics of ancient India or the republics adopted the practice of the Saṅgha. In any case, it is of some importance to to know that this method of reaching working conclusions after discussion and deliberation was well known very early in India, and that if we may trust our texts it was sanctioned by the Buddha himself for adoption by the Saṅgha. In the *Divyāvadāna* we read that on one occasion when the Buddha and the Saṅgha sojourning at Śrāvastī got an invitation for breakfast the next day at Sūrpāraka—we may leave on one side the element of miracle, that of flying through the air to desired places in a very short time, involved in the story—the Buddha made it a point of consulting his followers by making the announcement.

yo yuṣmākam utsahate śvaḥ Sūrpārakaṃ nagaraṃ gatvā bhoktuṃ sa salākāṃ gṛhṇātv iti (*Div.* p. 44).

Whoever amongst you is desirous of going to-morrow to the city of Sūrpāraka for the meal, let him vote accordingly.

The origin of this practice is narrated in the *Cullavagga* (IV. 9-10) 'Now at that time the Bhikkhus in chapter (Saṃgha) assembled, since they became violent, quarrelsome, and disputatious, and kept on wounding one another with sharp words (lit. hurting one another with mouth-javelins), were unable to settle the disputed question (that was brought before them). They told this matter to the Blessed One. "I allow you, O Bhikkhus, to settle such a dispute by a vote of the majority[1]" We must not omit to notice the restricted nature of the permission here accorded. Only acute disputes the settlement of which by accommodation and agreement has been found to be impossible, should be decided by a majority vote, on the rule that it is better to count heads than to break them. Readers of Lionel Curtis' *Civitas Dei* would doubtless have noticed how he hails this device as an invention of

1. SBE., Vol. 20, pp. 24-5.

ancient Greece that alone rendered political progress possible: that is of course true for the West. With us the practice is quite as old, if not older; and what is more, it was recognised from the first as the remedy in the last resort. The ideal continued to be unanimity of consent; and it is only if that was unattainable, and necessity forced some kind of a practical decision that voting was resorted to. The section of *Cullavagga* cited above prescribes the procedure for the appointment of an impartial 'teller' and this bears out what has been said above:

'And thus shall he be appointed. First the Bhikkhu is to be requested (whether he will undertake the office). Then some able and discreet Bhikkhu is to bring the matter before the Saṃgha, saying, "Let the venerable Saṃgha hear me. If the time seems meet to the Saṃgha, let the Saṃgha appoint a Bhikkhu of such and such a name as taker of the voting tickets (*Salākā-gāhaka*). This is the motion (*ñatti*). Let the venerable Saṃgha hear me. The Saṃgha appoints a Bhikkhu of such and such a name as taker of the tickets. Whosoever of the venerable ones approves of the Bhikkhu of such and such a name being appointed as taker of the tickets, let him keep silence. Whoever approves not thereof, let him speak. The Bhikkhu of such and such a name is appointed by the Saṃgha as taker of the voting tickets. Therefore it is silent. Thus do I understand".

The next section proceeds to lay down the types of cases in which the taking of votes is invalid and improper and others where it is legitimate. In fact centuries after the days we have been speaking of, village communities in South India in the enjoyment of full autonomy and possessing constitutional arrangements of varying degrees of complexity found it possible to carry on their work with practically no resort to voting as there was general readiness to co-operate in integrating all the legitimate points of view that were entitled to consideration. Obstruction was certainly not unknown, and one inscription of about A.D. 800 from a village in the Tinnevelly district contains provisions for punishing the obstructionists who persisted in unreasonable opposition so as to make administration of the affairs of the village impossible. But such instances are rare; the general rule was harmony. Even now this practice is followed in all well-conducted executive bodies and business directorates; it is at once the cause and effect of a

sense of social responsibility and harmony among the members. There is no divine right attaching to numbers, and the occasions when decision must have regard to numbers irrespective of right or reason must be few in a healthy community.

I shall conclude this brief section on polity with just one more extract which throws light on the exact meaning of the terms *śreṣṭhī and mantrī,* terms of frequent occurrence in the literature of Indian polity. In a stock description of the Buddha occur the phrases:

Sārthavāha iva baṇig-gaṇaparivṛtaḥ śreṣṭhīva paurajanaparivṛtaḥ Koṭṭarāja iva mantrigaṇa-parivṛtaḥ.

Clearly the Sārthavāha corresponds roughly to the modern President of the Chamber of Commerce, and *Śreṣṭhī* to the Mayor of the city; and *mantrī* is adviser to a provincial ruler. Aśoka inscriptions mention *mantri pariṣads* all over the empire.

IV. RELIGIOUS SECTS AND PRACTICES

The age of the Buddha was an age of religious excitement. It was marked by bold experiments in thought and innovations in ascetic practices. There came about in consequence an extraordinary multiplication of sects which competed with one another to catch the ear and the patronage of monarchs and merchants. And one of the most common methods adopted for this purpose was the exhibition of miracles as evidence of the attainment of higher spiritual power. In the *Divyāvadāna* a whole section (no. XII) is devoted to this side of the Buddha's work, and it bears the name *Prātihāryasūtra,* the sūtra of the miracles. The motives underlying such exhibitions are well brought out in a conversation among the *tīrthikas* at the commencement of this section. The account (*Div.*, pp. 143-4) opens with a mention of six famous opponents of the Buddha all of them living in Rājagṛha and all posing as omniscient prophets though in fact they were not so.

Tena khalu samayena Rājagṛhe nagare ṣaṭ Pūraṇādyāḥ śāstāro'sarvajñāḥ sarvajñamāninaḥ prativasanti sma tadyathā Pūraṇaḥ Kāśyapo, Maskarī Gośālīputraḥ, Saṃyājī Vairaṭṭīputro 'jitaḥ Keśakambalaḥ, Kakudaḥ Kātyāyano. Nirgrantho jñātiputraḥ

It is possible that this statement is not quite historical in the form in which it stands, and that religious leaders separated by

some intervals of time have been treated as contemporary by legend. But this does by no means take away from the value of the conversation as index to the state of feeling among the different sects and their mutual relations; for in such matters tradition has an authentic way of conserving the truth. The talk among the *tīrthikas* took place as they were seated together in the hall of recreation (*kutūhalaśālā*) of Rājagṛha, and is reported thus:

atha ṣaṇṇāṃ Pūraṇādīnāṃ tīrthyānāṃ kutūhalaśālāyāṃ saṃniṣaṇṇānāṃ saṃnipatitānām ayam evaṃrūpo 'bhūd-antarā kathāsamudāhāraḥ / Yat Khalu bhavanto Jānīran yadā śramaṇo Gautamo loke 'nutpannas tadā vayaṃ satkṛtāś cābhūvan gurukṛtāś ca mānitāś ca pūjitāś ca rājñāṃ rājamātrāṇāṃ, brāhmaṇānāṃ gṛhapatīnāṃ naigamānāṃ jānapadānāṃ sārthavāhānām lābhinaś cābhūvaṃś cīvara-piṇḍapāta-śayanāsana-glānapratyaya-bhaiṣajya-pariṣkārāṇām.

We all know that so long as Gautama was not born into the world we were honoured and maintained in comfort by kings, real and titular, brahmins, householders, guilds, country-folk, mayors and chief merchants, and our wants regarding clothing, food, shelter and medical aid in sickness were being duly met. But, continues the text, since the advent of Gautama, all honour and attention goes to him and his followers, and we are left high and dry, though we are really possessed of spiritual power and knowledge, while Gautama only pretends to have them.

asmākaṃ ca lābhasatkārāḥ sarveṇa sarvaṃ samucchinnaḥ / vayaṃ sma ṛddhimanto Jñānavādinaḥ / Śramaṇo 'pi Gautamo ṛddhimān jñānavādīty ātmānaṃ pratijānīte.

So they propose to challenge Gautama to a public exhibition of their spiritual powers by means of miracles, and offer to perform two miracles for one of Gautama as proof of their attainment of the highest stage of spiritual evolution.

yāvac chramaṇo Gautama uttare manuṣyadharme ṛddhiprātihāryaṃ vidarśayiṣyati vayaṃ taddviguṇaṃ tattriguṇaṃ vidarśayiṣyāma upārdhaṃ mārgaṃ śramaṇo Gautama āgacchatu vayam apy upārdhaṃ mārgaṃ gamiṣyāmaḥ / tatrāsmākaṃ bhavatu śramaṇena Gautamena sārdham uttare manuṣyadharme riddhiprātihāryaṃ (Div., pp.,143-4)

Somewhat puerile is the proposal made by the opponents of Gautama, calculated to emphasise their equality with him, that

they would go half the way and Gautama must come half the way —this is no metaphor, but a reference to the physical distance separating the rival parties—and that the competition must take place at a spot equidistant from where the parties were. The matter was reported to king Śreṇika Bimbisāra who arranged a contest with another monarch as umpire, and Gautama had the best of it.

The *Avadānaśataka* has its own much briefer version of the contest between the *tīrthikas* and Gautama, and the actual contest as narrated in that work may be passed in review here as it is more compact and at the same time conveys a vivid idea of what happened on such occasions. According to this account (*Av.*, i. 47f.) two śreṣṭhīs of Śrāvastī, one devoted to Pūraṇa and the other to Gautama, developed a hot dispute about the relative superiority of their respective teachers and each pledged the whole of his property as wager. What followed is best learnt from the text itself (*AV.*, I. 48):

yāvat rājñaḥ Prasenajitaḥ śrutam / tena amātyānām ājñā dattā / tayormimāmsā kartavyeti // tatastair amātyais-sarvavijite ghaṇṭāvaghoṣaṇam kāritam saptame divase Buddha-Tīrthikopāsakayor-mīmāmsā bhaviṣyati ye cādbhutāni draṣṭukāmās-te āgacchant-viti // tataḥ saptame divase vistīrṇāvakāśe pṛthivīpradeśe 'nekeṣu prāṇiśata-sahasreṣu samnipatiteṣu gaganatale cānekeṣu devatāsahasreṣu samnipatiteṣu gomayamaṇḍalake klpte sarvagandhamālyeṣu upahṛteṣu pūrvataram tīrthikopāsakena satyopayācanam kṛtam / yena satyena Pūraṇa prabhṛtayaḥ ṣaṭ śāstāraḥ loke śreṣṭhāḥ anena satyenemāni puṣpāṇyayam ca dhūpa idam ca pānīyam tānupagacchantviti // evam pravyāhṛta-mātre tāni puṣpāṇi bhumau patitānyagnir-nirvṛtaḥ pānīyam pṛthivyām astam parikṣayam paryādānam gatam // tato mahājanakāyena kilakilāprakṣveḍoccair-nādo muktaḥ / yam abhivīkṣya tīrthopāsakas-tūṣṇībhūto madgubhūtaḥ srastaskandho'dhomukho niṣpratibhānah pradhyānaparamaḥ kare kapolam dattavā cintāparo vyavasthitaḥ //.

The matter goes up to the king who orders his ministers to arrange for a contest between the two preachers. They proclaim by sound of bell throughout the realm that there would be the contest on the seventh day when all would be welcome who were interested in witnessing miracles. A wide arena is prepared, and on the seventh day there was a great concourse of men and gods on

earth and in the sky. Sandal, flowers and other requisites of worship were assembled within a prepared circle smeared over with cow-dung, and the *tīrthika* devotee opened the proceedings with an oath saying: 'by the *satya* by which Pūraṇa and other teachers, six in number, excel in the world, by that *satya* may these flowers, this incense, and this water reach unto them'; no sooner had he said this than the flowers fell on the ground, the fire in which incense was burning went out, and the water spilt and disappeared into the earth. There was great uproar among the crowds of spectators, and seeing this the *tīrthika* devotee was struck dumb and sat with a hangdog look with the cheek in the palm of his hand. The sequel of the Bauddha's oath was very different; in fact the discomfiture of the *tīrthika* heartened him greatly and he set about his business with great cheer and came out throughly successful. He assumed an attitude of salutation and uttered the oath, and the flowers rose and flew along the sky like a row of *haṃsas* in the direction of Jetavana together with the incense which looked like cloud and the water like a rod of beryl; they were followed by all the spectators also. And the flowers went and settled on the Buddha's head, and the incense and water in front of him. The whole crowd of spectators was converted by the miracle, and was then addressed a sermon by the Buddha:

'tato bhagavacchrāvakena harṣotkaṇṭhajātena prasādavikasitābhyām nayanābhyām-ekāmsam uttarāsangam kṛtvā dakṣiṇa-jānumaṇḍalam pṛthivyām pratiṣṭhāpya satyopayācanam kṛtam / yena satyena Bhagavān sarvasattvānām agryo'nena satyenemāni puṣpāṇi dhūpa udakam Bhagavantam upagacchat-viti / evam pravyāhṛtamātre tāni puṣpāṇi hamsapanktivākā śe Jetavanābhimukham samprasthitāni dhūpo' bhrakūṭavad-udakam vaiḍūryaśalākāvat // atha sa mahājanakāyaḥ tat prātihāryam dṛṣṭvā kilakilāprakṣveḍoccaiś śabdam kurvamsteṣām samprasthitānām pṛṣṭhataḥ pṛṣṭhataḥ samanubaddhaḥ// tatastāni puṣpāṇi Bhagavata upari sthitāni, dhūpa udakam cāgrataḥ// tatassa mahājanakāyo labdhaprasādo Bhagavataḥ pādābhivandanam kṛtvā purastānniṣaṇṇo dharmaśravaṇāya//.

Such reports are not indeed history, but important acts of faith which influenced the course of history. Yet even so the narrative gives a welcome glimpse into the *milieu* of ancient Indian social and religious life. The manner in which a dispute starts

between two rich merchants, the way they seek to settle it, the interest of the king and the ministers in the affair, the measures taken for the announcement of the day and place of disputation, and the interest of the people in general in its progress, have all the air of verisimilitude. The preparation of the arena including the circles smeared with cowdung for receiving the requisites of worship must be noted.

Lastly, the mode of salutation adopted by the Buddhist devotee deserves particular attention : it consists in adjusting the upper cloth *(uttarāsaṅga)* so as to leave one shoulder bare—it was usually the right shoulder—and then kneeling on one leg planting the right knee on the ground. The *Divyāvadāna* (p. 19) also describes this method of salutation in identical terms, adding only that the kneeling was followed by bowing with the hands in the pose of *añjali (añjaliṃ kṛtvā praṇamya)* in the direction of the object of veneration. It is interesting to note further that the same method was also followed by women who however do not kneel ; here is the description in *Avadānaśataka (AV.* ii p. 3) of how Suprabhā saluted the Buddha :

atha suprabhādārikā utthāyāsanād-ekāmsam-uttarāsamgam kṛtvā yena Bhagavāms-tenāñjalim praṇamya Bhagavantam idam avocat.

The mode of salutation adopted by Aśoka when he meets the patriarch Upagupta is somewhat more elaborate ; he is said first to have prostrated himself at full length on the ground and kissed the feet of Upagupta, and then having risen, he kneeled on the ground on both his knees and made an *añjali* with his hands before beginning to speak. Thus :

mūlanikṛtta iva drumaḥ sarvaśarīreṇopoguptasya pādayor nipatito mukhatuṇḍakena ca pādāv anuparimārjyotthāya dvau jānumaṇḍalau pṛthivītale nikṣipya kṛtāñjaliḥ sthaviropaguptaṃ nirīkṣamāṇa uvāca (Div. p. 387).

Even now we may see in our villages every day persons lowering the upper cloth from their shoulders while passing in front of elders and others worthy of respect, and tying it round the waist when they wish to prostrate before them. The adjustment of the *uttarīya* to show respect is then a very ancient custom, followed by women too when they were wearing their clothes in two pieces like men.

Let us note the expression *labdhaprasādaḥ* describing the effect of the miracle on the audience, and the result of it, *viz.*, the readiness of the crowd to salute the Buddha and sit at his feet to listen to his preaching. *Prasāda* is thus used of a state of mind which is ready to receive the light of Buddha's teaching and profit by it, and *prasādaka* is one who helps another to get into this state of mind. And this term is used in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions particularly of the *theras* of Ceylon who are described as the *pasādakas* of Kaśmīra, Gandhāra and other countries ; the meaning of this word has been the subject of some discussion, and hence the interest of the contexts in which it occurs in the Avadāna literature. In the *Divyāvadāna*, there occurs a passage in which the meaning of this quasi-technical word in Buddhist parlance stands out most clearly. Some monks who were sceptical of Panthaka's capacity for ministry asked one of his followers if any success attended Panthaka's preaching to the people ; the answer was that there was none among the crowd who was not 'converted'—the expression used both in the question and answer being *prasādita*, i.e., made to get *prasāda*. The answer also explains the meaning further by saying that every one present, 12,000 beings in all, saw the truths i.e., obviously the Four Aryan Truths of Buddhism. Here is the text (Div. 495) :

adyāyuṣmatā Panthakena kiṃ mahājanakāyo na prasādito vā prasāditaḥ / āyuṣmato na kaścid aprasādito / Bhagavatā Vārāṇasyāṃ Ṛṣivadane Mṛgadāve triparivartaṃ dvādaśākāraṃ dharmyaṃ cakraṃ pravartitaṃ ; tad adyāyuṣmatā Panthakenā-nupravartitam / yāvad gāthārthaṃ na vibhajati tāvad dvādaśabhiḥ prāṇisahasraiḥ satyāni dṛṣṭāni /

To revert to the relations between the *tirthikas* and the Buddha. On one occasion the *tīrthikas* are said to have prevailed upon the *gaṇa* of the city of Bhadraṃkara to pass a resolution *(kriyākāra)* that no citizen was to go and meet the Buddha who was expected to visit the city and that any one who violated the resolution would be fined sixty *kārṣāuaṇas*. On his arrival at the city the Buddha sent word to a gṛhapati Meṇḍhaka by name, saying that he had come to the city only on his account and that it was not proper of him to shut his house and stay indoors and thus behave discourteously to his guest. When he pleaded the resolution of

* See D. C. Sirkar, *Successors of Sātavāhanas*, p. 28 & n.

the *gaṇa*, the messenger, a girl duly instructed by the Buddha, promptly answered saying that his son carried on his person an inexhaustible purse of 500 coins which filled itself automatically everytime it was emptied, and that it should not be difficult for him to come out, meet the Buddha and pay the fine to the guild. This convinced Meṇḍhaka of the omniscience of the Buddha, for the inexhaustible purse of his son was a well-guarded secret and he had alluded to it in his message through the girl. So he went to the Buddha having set apart the money he had to pay as fine, and after listening to his preaching realised the noble truths of his creed. He then asked the Buddha if similar benefit could be had by the people of Bhadraṃkara to which he replied in the affirmative. When he went back home, he put up a heap of *kārṣāpaṇas* in the midst of the city and announced that any one who wanted to go and meet the Buddha might do so after paying the fine due to the *gaṇa* from the coin heap. The people assembled and asked him if seeing the Buddha brought great good; when he said yes, they said; 'in that case let the resolution made by the *gaṇa* be rescinded by the *gaṇa*,' and this was done, after which people went to see the Buddha in numbers:

Janakāyaḥ kathayati/ gṛhapate śreyaḥ śramaṇasya Gautamasya darśanam/ sa kathayati/ śreyaḥ/ te kathayanti/ yady evaṃ gaṇenaivaṃ kriyākāraḥ kṛto gaṇa evodghāṭayatu, ko'tra virodhaḥ/ te kriyākāram udghāṭya nirgantum ārabdhāḥ (Div., p. 130).

The worship of relics (*śārīra)* became an integral part of Buddhism and the practice evidently began not very long after the demise of the Master. But there is a story in the *Avadānaśataka* (No. 54) which centres round the name of Śrīmatī, a martyr in the cause, and boldly claims for the practice the sanction of the Buddha himself. It is to the effect that when one day after his conversion king Bimbisāra was sporting with his women in the pleasure-garden of his palace, they said to him that as they had found it difficult to go and worship the Buddha every day, it would be a good idea to establish within the harem a *stūpa* enshrining his hair and nails to which they could offer constant worship with flowers, garlands, unguents, umbrellas, flags, festoons and so on:

Antaḥpurikābhī rājā (Bimbisāro) vijñapto deva vayam na śaknumo 'hanyahani Bhagavantam upasamkramitum tat sādhu devo'smin-nantaḥpure Tathāgatasya keśanakhastūpam pratiṣṭhāpayed yatra vayam asakṛt puṣpair gandhair mālyair vilepanaiśchatrair dhvajaiḥ patākābhiḥ pūjām kuryāmeti (Av. i. 307-8)*.

The king thereupon applied to the Buddha for some parings of his hair and nails for the purpose he had in view, and his request was granted:

yāvadrājñā Bimbisāreṇa Bhagavān vijñapto dīyatām asmabhyam keśanakham yena vayam Tathāgata-stūpam antaḥpuramadhye pratiṣṭhāpayāma iti/ Yāvad Bhagavatā keśanakham dattam (Av. i. 308):

Some time later when Ajātaśatru became king, he forbade worship at this *stūpa* just as he put a stop to all noble institutions established by his *dhārmic* father whom he had put to death on the advice of Devadatta in order to make himself king:

yadā punā rājñā-jātaśatruṇā Devadattavigrāhitena pitā dhārmiko dharmarājo jīvitādvyavaropitaḥ svayam ca rājyam pratipannaḥ tadā bhagavacchāsane sarvadeyadharmās samucchinnāḥ kriyākāraśca kāritaḥ na kenacit tathāgatastūpe kārāḥ kartavyā iti (ib).

Let us note by the way the use of the word *kriyākāra* here to describe a new regulation issued by the king as well as to the resolution of the *gaṇa* at the city of Bhadraṃkara cited above from the *Divyāvadāna*. The working of the new order and the sight of the *stūpa* neglected during the fortnightly festivals (*yadā pañcadaśyām pravāraṇā samvṛttā*) filled the ladies of the harem with profound sorrow, and one among them, Śrīmatī by name, bethought herself of the greatness of the Master, and in utter disregard of her own life, she cleaned the *stūpa* and adorned it with rows of lamps:

tatra ca Śrīmatīnāmāntaḥpurikā/ sā svakam jivitam agaṇayitvā buddhaguṇāmścā-nusmṛtya keśanakhastūpam sammṛjya dīpamālām akārṣīt/ (ib).

Ajātaśatru caught sight of the illumination from the top of his palace, and when he heard of what Śrīmatī had done, he sent for her and questioned her strictly why she had transgressed the king's command. Her answer to the king on that occasion is the

* Cf. tatra stūpamahovartate/ śrāddhā brāhmaṇagṛhapatayo vicitrairgandhamālyavilepanaiśchatrairdhvajāiḥ patākābhiḥ pūjām kurvanti. (*Av.* I. p. 383)

eternal answer of freedom against tyranny; she said that by disobeying his order, she had kept the higher, the more righteous command of his father:

Yadyapi mayā tava śāsanam atikrāntam kim tu dharmarājasya Bimbisārasya śāsanam nātikrāntam (Av. i. 308-9).

The angry monarch killed her on the spot, and she became a goddess in heaven. The *motif* of this story has furnished the theme for Tagore's *'Sacrifice'*.

The monks assembled together in convenient spots twice a year for certain purposes, and the texts in the *avadānas* bearing on this practice are of considerable interest as revealing a part of the ancient educational system relating to the religious and theological part of it, and as they bear a fairly close resemblance to the rites of *adhyāyopākarma* observed to this day by the Brahmin community at least in South India. As may be expected, the present practice is a soul-less ritual the meaning of which is lost upon most who partake in it, the officiating priests not excluded. In substance it purpots to be the ceremonial commencement of the study of the Veda and its *aṅgas* at the beginning of the academic term, so to say, which is fixed at the commencement of the rainy season, when the first showers have fallen and the earth is green with the new sprouts of grass, in the month of *āṣāḍha* either on the day of Hasta asterism or on the full-moon day; it is also accompanied, generally on the next day, with an expiation for failure to lay aside the study formally at the end of the term, the *adhyāya-utsarga*, prescribed for the day of Rohiṇi or the full-moon day in the month of Taiṣa. This practice rests on ancient custom; but the *sūtras* bearing on it, for instance, those in the Āpastamba Gṛhya at the end of the fourth Paṭala, do not seem to have the same authenticity as the rest of the texts in which they appear. It is therefore a moot question whether the definition of the educational term implied in the days prescribed for the beginning *(upākarma)* of *adhyayana* and for its laying aside *(utsarga)* was started by the Buddhist *saṅgha* in the first instance and copied by Brahmanical schools, or whether, like many other institutions common to both, the practice dates from a time anterior to the rise and progress of the Saṅgha and adapted by it to its own purposes.

Our first text on this subject comes from the *Avadānaśataka* and reads as follows:

tena khalu samayena Śrāvastyām bhikṣūṇām dvau samnipātau bhavataḥ/ eka āṣāḍhyām varṣopanāyikāyām dvitiyaḥ Kārttikyām pūrṇamāsyām/ tatra bhikṣavaḥ pātrāṇi pacanti, cīvarāṇi dhāvayanti pāmsukūlāni ca sīvyanti// yāvad anyatamo bhikṣuś cīvaram syotukāmaḥ sūcīchidram sūtrakam na śaknoti pratipādayitum/ sa karuṇa-dīna-vilambitair-akṣarair-uvāca ko loke puṇyakāma iti (Av. i. 182-3).

This means: 'At that time the bhikṣus used to have two meetings (in a year) at Śrāvastī; one in Āṣāḍha (month) at the beginning of the rains, the second on the full moon day in Kārttika (month). Then the monks baked their (begging) bowls, had their robes (civarāḥ) washed, and sewed the rags into robes. A certain bhikṣu desiring to sew his cīvara (robe), was unable to put the thread into the eye of the needle; he cried out in a slow feeble and piteous voice: 'Is there anyone in the world eager to win merit (*puṇya*, by helping another in trouble)?' As it happened the Buddha himself answered his call, but we need not pursue the story. The similarity between the *varṣā* of the Buddhist monks and the *cāturmāsya* of the Brahminical ones has often been noted. It may be noted further that the time of the two meetings noted in the *avadāna* differs slightly from, but follows the same principle as, that of the *adhyāyopākarma* and *utsarga*, and the close relation between the two sets of timings will become clearer from the next citation. The uses to which the monks are said to put the occasion of these meetings, and the mention of needle and thread for stitching must be noted, the latter particularly in view of the statement sometimes made that stitching of clothes was unknown in India till relatively very late times. The next extract comes from the *Divyāvadāna*:

Dharmatā khalu yathā Buddhānāṃ Bhagavatāṃ dvau śrāvakāṇāṃ saṃnipātau bhavata āṣāḍhyāṃ varṣopanāyikāyāṃ Kārttikapaūrṇamāsyām/ evaṃ mahāśrāvakāṇām api tatra ye āṣāḍhīvarṣopanāyikāyām upasaṃkrāmanti te tāṃs tān manasikāraviśeṣān-ādāya tāsu tāsu grāma-nigama-rāṣṭra-rājadhānīṣu varṣā upagacchanti/ Ye Kārttikyāṃ ca pūrṇamāsyām upasaṃkrāmanti te svādhyāyanikāṃ paripṛcchanikāṃ ca yācanti yathādhigataṃ cārocayanti (Div., 489).

The text occurs elsewhere in the work with variations of no great significance except that *sūtra, vinaya* and *mātṛkā* are named specially as the portions of the scripture studied afresh by monks assembling on the *paurṇimāsī* of Kārttika (p. 18). Both *śrāvakas* and *mahāśrāvakas* then are said to have followed the practice of attending to set tasks *(manasikāraviśeṣās)* in the various places where they go for the *varṣā* (rains) after getting their assignments at the Āṣāḍha meeting. Those who assemble in Kārttika repeat what they have already learnt, and solicit instruction in new parts of the scripture and discussions of doubtful points *(paripṛcchanikā).*

The close connection with early Brahmanical institutions maintained by Buddhism becomes clear from the employment of the term *brahmacaryam* to describe the condition of the *Bhikṣu* after his ordination. Thus Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa says :

labheyāhaṃ bhadanta Mahākātyāyana svākhyāte dharmavinaye pravrajyām upasampadām bhikṣubhāvaṃ careyam ahaṃ bhavato'ntike brahmacaryam (Div. p. 15).

It is well known that a person becomes a *bhikṣu* after the two ceremonies of *pravrajyā* and *upasampadā* which may take place both together or with an interval according to circumstances. Only a monk of another faith has to serve a novitiate of four months before receiving *upasampadā (Mahāvagga,* SBE. xiii, pp. 186-7), and a youth below twenty will have to wait as *samaṇera* till he completes his twentieth year of age when he can be given *upasampadā (ib.* pp. 204-12).

It is not without interest to note here that the *Divyāvadāna* makes mention in one of its stories of a certain *parivrājaka,* Mākandika by name, who has a wife called Sākali and daughter Anupamā by her ; the daughter he is said to have offered to the Buddha himself for wife *(Div.* pp. 515-6) ; the Buddha, of course, does not accept her ; moreover, he explains the incident, as usual, by reference to occurrences in a previous birth of all the persons concerned. All the same, the facts that in the story Mākandika, a monk, is seen to be leading a wordly life with a wife by his side, and that he could bring himself to entertain the idea of offering his daughter as bride to Gautama Buddha when he came in the course of his peregrinations to the native town of Mākandika, *viz,* Kalmāṣadamya in the Kuru country, are full of sngnificance, and apparently refer

to aspects of clerical life of which we do not know much at present. It is true that in the third of the four *āśramas,* that of *Vānaprastha,* a person can live in the forest with his wife as companion, but then his life was one of asceticism with no thought of ordinary social rights and duties, much less of sex. The Avadāna text regarding Mākandika contains no hint whatsoever that his position was in any way exceptional. This will become clear from the sentences cited below from his *avadāna* (No. xxxvi) :

tena khalu punaḥ samayena Kalmāṣadamye Mākandiko nāma parivrājakaḥ prativasati / tasya Sākalir nāma patnī / tasyā duhitā jātā abhirūpā darśanīyā . . . . . . / tasyā Anupameti nāmadheyaṃ vyavasthāpitam / sā unnītā vardhitā / Mākandikaḥ saṃlakṣayati / iyaṃ dārikā na mayā kasyacit kulena dātavyā na dhanena nāpi śrutena kiṃtu yo'syā rūpeṇa samo vāpy adhiko vā tasya mayā dātavyeti (p. 515).

This *parivrājaka* therefore bears a daughter, brings her up, and when she comes to be of the proper age, begins to worry about her marriage ; and the qualification he looks for in the bridegroom is neither birth, nor wealth nor even learning, but beauty equal to or surpassing that of Anupamā ! This is indeed a far cry from all our common notions of Buddhist monachism.

With such facts before us we should not find it difficult to accommodate Aśoka's 'entry into the Saṃgha' to the continuance of his active rule as monarch ; it is perhaps not quite accurate to think of him as monk and monarch at the same time. The position seems to me to be correctly explained in the following note from a learned Buddhist scholar of to-day, Mr. Dharmananda Kosambi of Benares, which I was fortunate enough to elicit from him by the courtesy of his eminent son, Professor D. D. Kosambi of Poona : 'In the Rūpnātha, Brahmagiri and Māski edicts, Aśoka says ; 'I have been an *upāsaka* for 2½ years, but (at first) did not exert myself particularly. For more than a year (or more than a year ago) I entered the Saṃgha and exerted myself greatly *(adhikāni aḍhatiyāni vasāni aham upāsake. . . . sātireke tu kho samvacharam yam mayā samhe upayite bādham ca me pakamte).* Here *'Saṃgham upete, upayite or upagate'* indicates that Aśoka did enter the Saṃgha once upon a time. But this (regal) tradition did not enter into Ceylon, though it is current in Burma and Siam. There, the kings have necessarily to enter into the Saṃgha

for at least seven days; without that, the king cannot be invested with full royal powers. Harṣavardhana convoked every five years the gathering called 'Mokṣa'. HiuenTsang's description shows that he assumed the yellow robes of a monk on these occasions. So, to his day the tradition of assuming the monastic garments for a few days must have, apparently, been current even among the Indian Buddhist monarchs". I will only add, respectfully, that, *pace* Hiuen-Tsang, the evidence that Harṣavardhana was a Buddhist is by no means clear; and his conformity to Buddhist practices in the special assemblage at Kanauj and in the Mokṣa at Prayāga attended by Hiuen-Tsang was not only the concomitant of the general eclecticism characterstic of his family, but an act of special courtesy to the distinguished Chinese Master of the Law who was the honoured guest of the emperor.

I-tsing mentions that he saw an image of Aśoka in monastic robes, and this is easy to understand in the light of what has been said above. But the *avadānas* contain stories of Aśoka having abdicated the throne and turned a monk in the full sense of the term towards the close of his life, and one of the most striking references to this occurs in the form of a prophecy of the Buddha regarding the future births of a holy bull which occurs in the Aśokavarṇāvadāna (XI) of the *Divyāvadāna*. After several divine existences the bull, says the Buddha, will become Rājā Aśokavarṇa who will be a *cakravarti* and then renounce the world:

"rājā bhaviṣyati Aśokavarṇo nāma carkravartī cāturarṇavāntavijetā dhārmiko dharmarājaḥ saptaratnasamanvāgataḥ/ . . . . sa imām eva samudraparyantām mahāpṛthivīm akhilām akaṇṭakām anutpīḍām adaṇḍenāśastreṇa dharmeṇa samayenā-bhinirjityā-dhyāvatsyati/ so'parena samayena dānāni dattvā cakravarti-rājyam apahāya keśaśmaśrūṇy-avatārya kāṣāyāṇi vastrāṇi samyag eva śraddhaya-'gārād anagārikāṃ pravrajya pratyekāṃ bodhiṃ sākṣātkarisyaty-Aśokavarṇo nāma pratyekabuddho bhaviṣyati (Div. pp. 140-41).

One wonders if the phrase, *agārād-anagārikāṃ pravrajya, lit.* having renounced from the home to homelessness, contains a hint of a state in which domestic life was combined with *pravrajyā* as Mākandika did.

The *Divyāvadāna* seems to make a distinction between *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa* at least in one passage, and in another to state that the Buddha's preaching had the effect of preparing some of his listeners for *mokṣa*. The first text (*Div.* pp. 1-2) reads:

anyatmaś ca sattvaś caramābhāvikaś ca hitaiṣī gṛhīta-mokṣa-mārgāntonmukho na nirvāṇe bahirmukhaḥ saṃsārād anarthikaḥ sarvabhavagati-vyupapatti-parāṅmukho 'ntima- dehadhārī anyatamasmāt sattvanikāyāc-cyutvā tasyāḥ prajāpatyāḥ kukṣim avakrāntaḥ

True the reference to *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa* here is casual and the main statement relates to the progress of the *sattva* (being) from one existence to another; but the value of the distinction is nonetheless, but perhaps more for its coming in so much as a matter of course. In another context the Buddha's preaching is said to have produced different consequences on different listeners according to their pre-condition, and the effect on one set of them is described thus:

kaiścin mokṣabhāgīyāni kuśalamūlānyutpāditāni.

i.e., some became ready to do the good deeds that would enable them to attain *mokṣa*. How *mokṣa* was differentiated from *nirvāṇa*, I am not in a position to elucidate satisfactorily; but I feel that there is something here that calls for study. Childers noted the data pointing to the use of *nirvāṇa* in two senses (*Pali Dictionary, sv. nibbāṇa*); is *mokṣa* meant to describe the state of the Arhat who has not attained nibbāṇa, i.e., cessation of existence?

The doctrine of Karma and the allied conception of Kāla (conjuncture) received their utmost development in Buddhist thought, and it may well be that this extreme development occurred first within the fold of Buddhism, and that other creeds only kept pace with it; in any case these conceptions became vital ideas in the repertoire of Indian ethical sanctions, and it is of some interest to study the manifestations of these ideas in the *avadāna* literature. First the inexorable character of the fruit of Karma is emphasised in a verse which occurs quite often in the *avadānas*.

na praṇaśyanti karmāṇi kalpakoṭiśatairapi/
sāmagrīm prāpya kālam ca phalanti khalu dehinām//

The apparent delays in the fruition of Karma are thus due to the delays in the rise of the proper conjuncture, material and temporal, favourable to their exhibition. The same idea is even

more forcefully put in the following speech of Śyāmāvatī, an *upāsikā*, which occurs in the Mākandikāvadāna (*Div.* p. 532):

bhaginyo 'smābhir evaitāni karmāṇi kṛtāny upacitāni labdhasaṃbhārāṇi pariṇatapratyayāny oghavat pratyupasthitāni avaśyambhāvīni/ asmābhir eva kṛtāny upacitāni ko'nyaḥ pratyanubhaviṣyati/ uktaṃ ca Bhagavatā/

naivāntarikṣe na samudramadhye na parvatānāṃ
vivaraṃ praviśya/
na vidyate sa pṛthivīpradeśo yatra sthitaṃ
na prasaheta karmeti//

Here the stress is on the spatial aspect of the law of inexorability of the fruit of karma; you do not escape it wherever you may happen to be. Then there is the tag addressed often to the Bhikṣus at the end of the *avadānas* which draws the moral from the tale and exhorts the *bhikṣus* to devote themselves to the performance of good (white) deeds and the avoidance of dark deeds as the fruit of the former is good and of the latter not:

ekāntakṛṣṇānāṃ karmaṇāṃ ekāntakṛṣṇo vipāka ekāntaśuklānām-ekāntaśuklo vyatimiśrāṇāṃ vyatimiśraḥ/ tasmāt tarhi bhikṣava ekāntakṛṣṇāni karmāṇy apāsya vyatimiśrāṇi caikāntaśukleṣv eva karmasv ābhogaḥ karaṇīya ity evam vo bhikṣavaḥ śikṣitavyam (*Div.* 314, *Av.* ii, 13 etc.).

The working of the law of *karma* leads both to repetition of the events of previous births as in the story of Anupamā being offered by her father to the Buddha who rejects the offer (a repetition of what had occurred in a former birth of all the characters), or retribution for a past deed as in the blinding of Kuṇāla's eyes brought about by the intrigues of his step-mother Tiṣyarakṣitā. The former invites comparison with the famous *pratijñā* of Sītā in the *Raghuvaṃśa* (XIV, 66 ff.) and similar situations elsewhere. The stress on Kāla, favourable conjunction for the fruition of *Karma*, is best illustrated by the enquiry Upagupta is said to have made. Whether the time had come for the subjugation of Māra and the ending of his evil career of proud rivalry to the true doctrine:

kim asya vinayakāla upasthitha āhosvin neti, paśyati vinayakāla upasthitaḥ (*Div.* p. 357).

Students of early Tamil literature know how the author of the *Śilappadikāram* makes use of this conception of karma ripening in a favourable conjuncture to account for the tragic murder by which Kōvalan is cut down in the streets of the Pāṇḍyan capital, an apparently gross miscarriage of justice in a kingdom noted for its good and just rule.

The episode of Upagupta's subjugation of Māra seems to be important in another way in the literary history of India. The method of subjugation is at once curious and cunning. Upagupta approaches Māra with a flower garland in his hand which leads Māra to believe that he was being honoured by Upagupta who had at last deserted the law for his side; but when he gets near Māra, Upagupta ties the carcase of a snake on his head, that of a dog on his neck, and that of a man elsewhere on Māra's body, and then challenges Māra to shake them off. He is unable to do so and then rising in the sky, he declared that though he could not do it himself, he would get the corpses removed by the might of greater gods than himself:

yadi moktuṃ na śakyāmi kaṇṭhāt śvakuṇapaṃ svayam, anye devā api mokṣyante matto 'bhyadhikatejasaḥ/.

Māra went in turns to Indra, Rudra, Upendra, Kuvera, Yama, Varuṇa and others and failing to gain his object, he went to Brahmā in the end. Brahmā pleads inability to help, praises the Buddha and the glory of his disciples, and advises Māra to go to Upagupta himself and humbly seek relief from him acknowledging the error of his ways. (*Div.* pp. 357-9). Do we not find here a significant stage in the growth of the tendency which culminated in the production of a vast mass of purāṇic literature of a pronounced sectarian character? The germ of the tendency can of course be traced much further back, in what Max Müller called Henotheism of the Vedic religion.

It is commonly stated that Hīnayāna Buddhism concerned itself more with the liberation of individual from the *saṃsāra*, while the conception of the Bodhisattva who yearns and works for the deliverance of the whole world and postpones his own salvation till he attains this noble object, is the particular ornament of Mahāyāna Buddhism. But whether as a result of the new ideas playing upon old traditions, or as the original germ of this later development, the *Avadānaśataka* details stories in which the conception of one person working for the spiritual benefit of his neighbours plays an important rôle. This is done practicularly by

what is known as *Chandakabhikṣaṇa,* i.e., collecting of alms and gifts for the Saṃgha as Speyer explains the term. The celebrated Anāthapiṇḍada of Śrāvastī who had made large gifts to Buddha and Saṃgha was struck with the thought that he was accumulating merit for himself exclusively without his poorer fellow citizens having any chance of sharing in it. So he made up his mind to undertake a *chandakabhikṣaṇa,* and informed the king accordingly, who caused a proclamation to be made that on the seventh day from then Anāthapiṇḍada will go out on an elephant for *chandakabhikṣaṇa* and that every one was to contribute according to his means. When the *bhikṣaṇa* came off, people contributed in all sorts of ways, in the form of jewels of varying value, gold coins, and so on, down to a *kārṣāpaṇa* (*Av.* i. 313-4) :

tadā tasya buddhirabhavat/ kimatrāścaryam yadaham dānāni dadāmi puṇyāni vā karomi yannvaham daridrajanānugrahārtham Śrāvastīnivāsino janakāyāc-chandakabhikṣaṇam kṛtvā Bhagavantam saśrāvakasamghaṃ upatiṣṭheyam, evam me mahājanānugrahaḥ kṛto bhaviṣyati bahu cānena puṇyam prasūtam bhaviṣyatiti// tato '(A) nāthapiṇḍadena gṛhapatinā eṣa vṛttānto rājñe niveditaḥ/. rājñā sarvasyām Śrāvastyām ghaṇṭāvaghoṣaṇam kāritam/ śṛṇvantu bhavantaḥ Śrāvastīnivāsinaḥ paurā adya saptame divase Anāthapiṇḍado gṛhapatir-hastiskandhābhirūḍhaḥ Tathāgatasya saśrāvakasamghasyārthāya chandakabhikṣaṇam kartukāmaḥ/ yasya vo yanmātram parityaktam tadanupradātavyam iti// yāvat saptame divaśe Anāthapiṇḍado gṛhapatir hastiskandhādhirūḍhas Tathāgatasya saśrāvakasamghasyārthāya chandaka-bhikṣaṇam kartum pravṛttaḥ/ tatra yeṣām yanmātro vibhavas te tanmātram dātum pravṛttāḥ/ keciddhāram prayacchanti kecit kaṭakam kecit keyūram kecijjātarūpamālām kecidaṅgulimudrām kecinmuktāhāram keciddhiraṇyam kecit suvarṇam kecitantaśaḥ kārṣāpaṇam/ gṛhapatirapi parānugrahārtham pratigṛhṇāti/

Then comes a beautiful incident which gives point to the story. Seeing Anāthapiṇḍada from a distance engaged in this task, a poor woman who had with great difficulty after a struggle for three months just managed to procure a cloth to cover her shame and get into the streets, asked an *upāsaka* why this rich merchant was collecting alms from families poorer than his :

yadi tāvadayam gṛhapatirādhyo mahādhano....kasmādayam parakulebhyo bhaikṣam aṭati.

The *upāsaka* told her that he did it to help others who could not entertain the Buddha and the *Saṁgha* on their own to share in the merits of doing so :

parānugrahārthan ye' samarthā Bhagavantam saśrāvakasamgham bhojayitum teṣām arthe'nugraham karoti katham bahavas sametā Bhagavantam pratipadayeyur iti/.

Wanting to share in the merit, this poor woman, whose sole property was the cloth on her person got upon the terrace of a house, and from there she threw down her cloth upon Anāthapiṇḍada. He was surprised, and sent his men to find out who had done it, and when he learnt the truth, he sent valuable clothes to the woman ; but she died soon after as her end had come, and she reappeared among the gods in the Trayastriṃśa heaven.

There is the account (*Av.* II. 39 ff.) of another *chandakabhikṣaṇa* by another *gṛhapati* of Benares also bent on the good of others as well as himself :

ātmahita-parahitapratipannaḥ kāruṇiko mahātmā dharmakāmaḥ ; but it need not be pursued in detail as it contains no new feature.

V. SOME SOCIAL DATA

In this last section of the gleanings we shall notice some stray facts of interest on the social life of the age of the *avadānas,* and discuss at some length extracts bearing on the attitude of the Buddha and the Saṃgha to caste.

For listening to lectures the audience was seated in a semicircular fashion, possibly in a gallery, though of this we cannot be sure. Of Upagupta we read in the *Divyāvadāna* that he saw the audience seated in the form of a half-moon : *paśyati cārdhacandrākāreṇa pariṣad avasthitā* (p. 356). And this we should note was the shape of Buddhā's *pariṣad* to which he preached in his life time—as Upagupta saw it in a vision vouchsafed to him by his yogic powers. It would be rash to infer that this way of seating audiences went back to the days of the Buddha himself ; but that the mode must have been known for some time by the age of the *avadānas* of the Aśoka cycle can be assumed for certain.

The decoration of the bier (*śivikā*) on which the dead body of a woman in Rājagṛha was being carried to the burning ground is described in the following terms in the *Divyāvadāna* :

sā tair vikrośadbhir nīla-pīta-lohitā-vadātair vastraiḥ śivikām alaṃkṛtya Śītavanaṃ śmaśānam abhinirhṛtā (p. 264, also at p. 486 identical terms in another context where the corpse of a man is disposed). The use of cloths of different colours for decoration deserves notice.

We learn casually from the story of Upagupta that Vāsavadattā, the celebrated courtesan of Mathurā, charged a free of five-hundred *purāṇas* for a single night from her paramours ; considering that Upagupta was not in a position to pay her anything, she sends word to him by her maid that she did not expect even a *kārṣāpaṇa* from him, but would greatly appreciate the favour of a visit from him (*Div.* p. 353). Upagupta sends word to her that the time for his visit was not yet, and later visits her when she lies, cruelly mutilated, at the point of death, and preaches the law to her, pointing the evil consequences of indulgence in the pleasures of the senses (*Div.* p. 354-6).

A place of torture is mentioned once in the *Divyāvadāna* under the name *Jantugṛha*. When Tiṣyarakṣitā's machinations against Kuṇāla were discovered, Aśoka is said to have punished her with death by torture. Thus :

yāvad rājñā (A)śokena Tiṣyarakṣitā amarṣitena jantugṛham praveśayitvā dagdhā. (*Div.* p. 418).

On *Jantugṛha,* the editors of the *Divyāvadāna* note in the index : but should be *jatugṛha* (?), (Pali Jantāgharam) ? I am inclined to think the word is *yantra-gṛha,* a house of instruments (of torture), a form which the Pāli word cited seems to support. The burning to death of Tiṣyarakṣitā has apparently suggested (on the analogy of the famous episode in the *Mahābhārata)* the form *Jatugṛha ;* but I see little reason to accept this suggestion. That torture (kleśa) was employed in trials and punishments, we know definitely from the *Arthaśāstra.* We should note, however, that Jentāka in the sense of a sudatory room is known to the *Avadānaśataka* (Index, ii, S.V.)

A notorious adulterer (*pāradārika)* of Śrāvastī was condemned to death by king Prasenajit, and while he was being taken to the place of execution, he met the Buddha on the way and begged him to secure the king's pardon for him ; the Buddha sent word to the king by Ānanda that he would make a monk of the criminal, and the king acceded to the request and handed the man over to the Master, under whose care he turned over a new leaf—a good instance of the Buddha's love for the 'lowliest and the lost' (*Av.* i. p. 102 ff.) The capital punishment for adultery should be noted ; as also the description of the manner in which the adulterer is taken to the execution ground[1] :

sa rājapuruṣair nīlāmbara-vasanair udyataśastraiḥ karavīra-mālā-baddha-kaṇṭhe-guṇo rathyā-vīthī-catvara-śringāṭakeṣvanuśrāvyamāṇo dakṣiṇena nagaradvāreṇa apanīyate (*ib.* p. 102).

He is made to wear a garland of Oleander like a rope round his neck and paraded along the streets, roads and crossways of the city, and his crime is proclaimed everywhere by the executioners who wear dark robes and hold in their hands drawn weapons of various kinds, and finally he is led out of the city by the southern gate. Such a detailed picture, one may suppose, had some fairly close relation to facts.

The Buddha's reclamation of the adulterer of Śrāvastī, of whose birth and breeding no details are given, serves as a good introduction to some passages which bring the Master's attitude to caste, at least in so far as the *Saṃgha* was concerned. The *Avadānaśataka* (ii, p. 111 ff.) has the following story. When the Buddha visited Kapilavastu, six years after his Enlightenment, his father became sad at the sight of his son surrounded by *Jaṭilas* and *pravrajitas*, and made up his mind to ask one youth from each of the noble *Śākya* families to turn monk and keep his son company, and as a result of his proclamation 'five-hundred' (conventional for a large number) noble youths renounced worldly life and embraced the Order. Seeing so many abandoning worldly life and Kapilavastu for good, Upāli, a barber by birth, who was serving these men (*kalpaka upasthāyakaḥ*), developed much concern for his own future, and began to shed tears at the prospect of the desolate future opening out before him after the departure of his patrons ; the Śākya youths found out the state of his mind and did their best to console him with presents of jewels ; when he

1. Cf. Mṛcchakatikā.

had collected a good heap of them, a feeling of revulsion swept over him and he said to himself 'So many young men, well born and in the prime of their beauty and manhood, give up their wives and these jewels and joyfully take to a life of renunciation ; am I to be the pitiful fool who carries home these discarded jewels ?' He made up his mind to follow them in asceticism ; he went to the Buddha and was duly ordained. Then when the turn of the Śākya youths clad in the robes of monks came for salutation of the Buddha and the Saṃgha, they recognised Upāli and were unwilling to salute him on account of their superior birth, wealth and beauty *(kula-rūpa-vibhavānvitatvāt)*. Then Buddha addressed Bhadrika, the chief of the Śākya youth, in the following terms : 'Bhadrika, you must salute him, for birth, beauty, youth, riches, and the purity of the four *varṇas* count as nothing in this Order of mine'. Thereupon Bhadrika and others prostrated at full length, and a miraculous shaking of the earth registered the *dhārmic* nature of the occurrence. (*Av.* 113-4). The Buddha's address to Bhadrika and what followed may be reproduced in the original :

tatra Bhagavān āyuṣmantam Bhadrikam āmantrayate/ Bhadrika kartavyo'sya praṇāmo yasmādidam māmakam śāsanam na kula-rūpa - yauvanaiśvarya - cāturvarṇya - viśuddhim apekṣata iti// tato mūla-nikṛttā iva drumā Bhadrika-pramukhāṇi pañca śākya-śatāni dharmatām-avalambya pādayornipatitāni/ teṣām pādavandanasamakālam eveyam mahāpṛthivī ṣaḍvikāram prakampitā//..

The next instance which will bring these gleanings to an end is a striking example of the streak of radical social thought, a constant refrain of protest against the hierarchy and exclusiveness of caste, that Indian society has never been without and that has sometimes found poignant expression in legend and in the literatures of several Indian languages. No apology is needed for dwelling at some length on this fairly early specimen of such radical thinking on social affairs. Prakṛti is a Caṇḍāla girl (*mātaṅga dārikā*) from whom Ānanda, the well-known disciple of the Buddha, gets some drinking water to quench his thirst. Prakṛti begins to love Ānanda at sight, and her mother seeks to assist the daughter with magical charms. The Buddha who knows everything protects Ānanda from the effects of the charm. The Prakṛti appeals to the Buddha himself; the Buddha asks her parents if they are willing to give up Prakṛti to Ānanda : *anujñātā yuvābhyām Prakṛtir mātaṅgadārikā Ānandāyeti.* They said yes. Then he asked them to leave Prakṛti behind and go away. The Buddha then tells Prakṛti that if she loves Ānanda she will have to adopt his way of life : *tena hi Prakṛte ya Ānandasya veśaḥ sa tvayā dhārayitavyaḥ.* She agrees to take the holy Orders, and what followed is described thus :

atha Bhagavān yat tasyāḥ Prakṛtermātaṅgadārikāyāḥ pūrvasaṃcita-pāpaṃ durgati-gamanībhūtaṃ tat sarvaṃ pāpaṁ sarvadurgatipariśodhanayā dhāraṇyā niravaśeṣeṇa pariśodhya mātaṅgajāter vimocayitvā śuddhaprakṛtinirmalībhūtāṃ tāṃ Prakṛtiṃ mātaṅgadārikām idam avocat/ ehi tvaṃ bhikṣuṇī cara brahmacaryam (*Div.* 616).

That is, the Buddha removed from her all traces of sin that had brought about her low birth, and having thus purified her he made a *bhikṣuṇī* (nun) of her—sufficiently clear statement that even according to the reformer, the Caṇḍāla girl was not fit for the practice of asceticism as she was, and that, as a preliminary condition, she had to be released from that state of sinfulness and bondage to ignorance. The spiritual progress of Prakṛti was thereafter assured, and she soon came to realise and regret the folly of the love she had made to *bhikṣu* Ānanda in her nonage.

But the Buddha's action in ordaining the Caṇḍāla girl caused a great commotion among the Brahmin householders of Śrāvastī who complained to king Prasenajit saying : 'how can a Caṇḍāla girl observe the noble forms of living prescribed for monks and nuns ? and how can she enter the houses of the noble families of the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya gṛhapatis ?' The king agreed with them, and issuing from the city in a chariot with some of the householders, he went to Jetavana, the grove of Anāthapiṇḍada, to meet the Buddha. He left his chariot at a distance and walked on foot in the precints of the grove following the usual rule of courtesy in visiting *āśramas* (hermitages). The narrative describes at some length the attitude of the different visitors to the Buddha, the mode of salutation they adopted, and the way they behaved to him and to one another. (*Div.* pp. 618-9). Of Prasenajit we read :

praviśya yena Bhagavāṃstenopasaṃkrānta upasaṃkramya Bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvā ekānte niṣaṇṇaḥ/

Of the rest :

te 'pi saṃbahulāḥ Śrāvasteyakāḥ kṣatriya-brāhmaṇa-gṛhapatayo Bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvā ekānte niṣaṇṇāḥ/ apy-ekatyā Bhagavatā sārddhaṃ sammukhaṃ sammodanīṁ saṁrañjanīṃ vividhāṃ kathāṃ vyatisāryaikānte niṣṇṇāḥ/ apy-ekatyā Bhagavataḥ purataḥ svakasvakāni mātāpaitṛkāṇi nāma-gotrāṇi anuśrāvyaikānte niṣaṇṇāḥ/ apy-ekatyā yena Bhagavāṃstenāñjaliṃ praṇamyaikānte niṣaṇṇāḥ/ apy-ekatyās tūṣṇīṃbhūtā ekānte niṣaṇṇāḥ//.

The Buddha read the minds of the king and of all those who had accompanied him on that visit, and offered to tell the *bhikṣus* for their edification the entire story of the *bhikṣuṇī* Prakṛti beginning from her previous birth, caling it a *dhārmī kathā,* 'a story replete with Dharma' and was duly urged by them to narrate the story which he did.

The story that follows is the *avadāna* of Śārdulakarṇa (Ānanda in his former birth), the son of Triśaṅku Mātaṅgarāja (the king of the Mātaṅgas, i.e., Caṇḍālas) who was no other than the Buddha himself in a former birth ; the other chief characters in the *avadāna* are the learned brahmin Puṣkarasārī (later Śaradvatīputra, a bhikṣu) and his daughter Prakṛti (the same as Prakṛti, the *mātaṅgadārikā* whose love for Ānanda started the train of events leading to the narrative of the Buddha). The Mātaṅga (Caṇḍāla) king Triśaṅku after much thought proposed to Puṣkarasārī that he should give his daughter Prakṛti in marriage to his son Śārdūlakarṇa. The manner in which the proposal is made by Triśaṅku and it is received by Puṣkarasārī, and the dialogue that follows are of the utmost significance ; there is no need to pursue the details of this long-drawn argument with all its repetitions and digressions ; but it should be noted that Triśaṅku silences Puṣkarasārin finally not by his logic so much as by the display of his knowledge of Vedic lore which gives practical support to the view put forward by him that men are the architects of their own fortunes, that they are all of the same class with differences arising out of the differences in their *karma,* and that all are equally capable of attaining knowledge. Puṣkarasārī ends by accepting the position of Triśaṅku and agrees to marry his daughter to Śārdūlakarṇa.